

# AMUSEMENT TODAY <sup>© TM</sup>

Your Amusement Industry NEWS Leader!

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## Knoebels celebrates Grand Carousel's 100th anniversary

**STORY:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

ELYSBURG, Pa. — Knoebels' recently-opened Flying Turns is, understandably, getting the lion's share of attention this season. But one of the park's oldest and most beloved attractions — the magnificent Grand Carousel — also deserves recognition, especially since it celebrated its Centennial Anniversary in 2013.

This historically important cornerstone of the Knoebels operation has been a favorite of park guests since it opened in 1944. It was a different time back then, a time when something as simple as climbing aboard a gaily painted steed and racing around to the piping melody of a band organ could easily raise one's spirits. It's a tradition — as is the fact that one can still attempt to catch a brass ring for a free ride — that transcends generations, yet its effect endures. Such is the magic of an antique carousel.

### Creating a classic

According to records, the Grand Carousel was originally assembled in 1912-13 in North Beach, Long Island by George Kremer, a German immigrant who was a glassblower before working in carousel production. While the machine itself is considered to be an earlier Charles I. D Loeff model converted to accept jumpers, Kremer outfitted it with new horses from prominent wood-carver Charles Carmel, a Russian immigrant who carved carousel figures in his Brooklyn, N.Y. shop until his death in 1931.

This elegant four-row machine carries 63 horses (27 jumpers and 36 standers) along with three chariots attributed to Loeff. After operating for a period of time in North Beach, it was relocated

to Riverside Park in Rahway, New Jersey.

Only two of Kremer's carousels remain in operation: Knoebels' Grand Carousel and the Lakeside Park Carousel in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada.

### A carousel moves to Pennsylvania

Realizing they needed to upgrade their ride offerings because of the park's continuing rise in popularity, the Knoebel family purchased the carousel in 1941 from New Jersey's Riverside Park where it had operated for many years. Legend has it that the ride was so heavy that the front end of one of the transport truck lifted off the ground while attempting to scale a highway incline on the way to its new home. The carousel was completely assembled in late 1942 but sat idle with the rest of the park in 1943 as a result of World War II. Knoebels finally reopened for the 1944 season with its beautiful new Grand Carousel as a main attraction.

Over the years, the Grand Carousel has remained one of the park's most well-liked rides but it is especially significant to Dick Knoebel who recalls how some of his earliest memories are associated with the storied machine. Family members recall when Dick was very young he once wandered off alone into the park. After a relentless search, he was eventually found asleep inside a chariot on the spinning Carousel. "I was just a little tyke when Grandpa brought in our Grand Carousel to replace the little two-abreast menagerie machine we had," said Knoebel. "Later we took that one on the road and played local carnivals. Ergo, I grew up with our Carousel; one of my first jobs was ring boy. I also sold tickets for the Carousel and ran the Milk



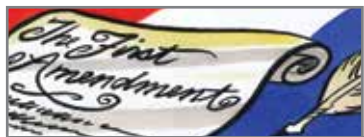
Knoebels magnificent Grand Carousel is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2013. It was originally assembled in 1912-13 in North Beach, Long Island by George Kremer, a German immigrant. The four-row machine carries 63 horses (27 jumpers and 36 standers) produced by prominent wood-carver Charles Carmel. It also features three ornate chariots attributed to Charles Loeff, and is one of few remaining carousels to allow riders to still reach for the brass ring. COURTESY KNOEBELS

Bottle game at the same time before I went to first grade. I recall painting the horses with my mother and dad in the off-season and we used any paint we had. I recall painting the hooves blue. Today I realize that was outlandish. Many years ago, the fancy stenciling on the sweeps was going to be painted under and my sister,

► See CAROUSEL, page 5







# NEWTALK

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**EDITORIAL:** Gary Slade, [gslade@amusementtoday.com](mailto:gslade@amusementtoday.com)

## Tidbits



Slade

This second November issue marks the last of our ongoing Continuing Coverage — Superstorm Sandy series that began December 2012 with news of the massive storm that did such tremendous damage to our amusement industry in both New Jersey and New York.

Our commitment to the post-Sandy editorial coverage included, all or part of 34 total pages, making this *Amusement Today's* biggest news series in our 17 years of publishing.

The editorial coverage would not have been possible without the Jersey Shore knowledge of AT's own **Dean Lamanna** (see Editorial, page 3) and NJAA's Executive Director **Kim Samarelli**, who I am now proud to call my newest industry friend. To both, I am in debt for their contributions on many tight deadlines.

I also have to thank **IAAPA**, the many Jersey Shore parks and piers who contributed photos, especially **Debbie Karu** at Casino Pier for her countless photo submissions. On the media level, I must also give a big Thank You to the editorial staff, photo editor and all the professional photographers at the **Asbury Park Press** in Neptune, N.J., for their kindness in allowing *Amusement Today* to reprint just a few of their outstanding photos taken in the field. We hope you, the AT reader, have enjoyed reading these Superstorm Sandy pages and the coverage we tried to bring to you. Thanks again to all who contributed.

There is a saying that "good things come to those who wait." That is certainly true for the folks at **Knoebels Amusement Resort** as the seven year wait was officially over on Oct. 4, when a sneak preview was held for invited guests to be the first riders on their newest coaster, the **Flying Turns**.

**AT's Scott Rutherford** has followed this ride project since it was first announced in 2006 and was on hand at the park as one of the first riders. His complete story recap can be found on pages 30-32.

Congratulations to **Dick Knoebel**, the entire Knoebels family and staff and all who contributed and for never giving up. At Knoebels, good things do come to those who wait!

—Gary Slade

**CARTOON:** Bubba Flint



**EDITORIAL:** Andrew Mellor, [amellor@amusementtoday.com](mailto:amellor@amusementtoday.com)

## Customer satisfaction is key



Mellor

Customer satisfaction is something all visitor attractions strive to achieve, and it was fascinating to read a recent survey on the subject carried out in the U.K. by mystery shopping specialist Shopper Anonymous.

The survey took place over a six-week period and was one of the most in-depth studies of customer service standards across the U.K. attractions sector ever undertaken. It involved mystery shops at large outdoor attractions, including theme and amusement parks, indoor play centres, zoos and seaside piers and the findings revealed some interesting results and a range of learning points applicable to all businesses.

The areas covered by the survey included visitors' experiences in finding the venue, payment and entrance, gift shop, various activity experiences, play activity experience, café, seeking help, team observations and toilets, and one glaring aspect that came through were the number of cases where staff failed to acknowledge a visitor properly or to engage with the visitor in any way.

Now I'm not about to preach to the converted here. I know everyone in management will appreciate the importance of welcoming guests in the correct manner, engaging with them, smiling at them and having a quick chat to make them feel welcome, valued and, where relevant (perhaps on a thrill ride) put them at ease as they are secured in their seat. But the Shopper Anonymous survey revealed that in many cases, when it comes to general staff who work in areas such as ride operation and gift shops, suitable interaction with the customer is often lacking.

I appreciate it's an age old problem and one operators are constantly fighting to improve, but these guys — the frontline staff — are the people visitors interact with the most throughout their day, so it's simply imperative that they do so properly. Not looking at a guest when they ask a question or not smiling at them when checking a safety restraint is a basic failing.

As I say, it's difficult to ensure every member of staff acts as they should with guests, but the Shopper Anonymous survey and the comments therein from its mystery shoppers certainly brings home how vital this aspect of any operation is.

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# Setting aside fun as tough times test industry commitment, resolve

Other than laughter and shrieks of joy, it's unusual to witness a spontaneous expression of emotion in our industry. But on Sept. 7, at **Amusement Today's** annual **Golden Tickets Awards** presentation in Santa Cruz, Calif., the rapt international attendees watching AT publisher **Gary Slade** announce his co-choice for 2013 Person of the Year experienced just such a moment.

It was a cathartic outpouring that began with Gary's voice cracking onstage mid-name reading, continued through his embrace of the honoree, and then rippled silently yet palpably across **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's** historic Cocoanut Grove Ballroom clear to the AT event staff table in the back, where I was seated.

The person accepting the award was **Kimberle Samarelli**, executive director of the **New Jersey Amusement Association**. In a business filled with smart, passionate people at every level of park administration, operations and support, Kim is that rare personality whose ground-level sense of duty remains unflappable even as personal pain coincides with enormous professional challenges.

The past year has been filled with both. And those of us who've grown to know Kim in that time were primed to shed a few tears in Santa Cruz.

When **Superstorm Sandy** slammed the northeastern U.S. one year ago, it dealt a widespread blow to our industry the likes of which had never been seen. At Ground Zero in **Seaside Heights**,



## COMMENTARY

**EDITORIAL:** Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

N.J., Kim confronted not only a shattered beach-front amusement zone which became universally emblematic of the disaster, but stepped to the fore, first responder-style, to assist her entire community while she and her family coped with the loss of their own home.

As AT's lead correspondent covering the storm's toll and the industry's slow recovery from it, I felt a special responsibility to my home state; I was born and raised a "boardwalk brat" and have family members who've run Jersey Shore amusements for many years. Although I live in Southern California now, I took Sandy's assault on New Jersey personally. Kim Samarelli, understanding the importance of communication in a time of crisis, became a tireless and invaluable long-distance collaborator in my reporting — and for that, I am grateful.

Gary Slade has been a longtime friend and colleague, and I commend him for making AT's 12 months of dedicated, often front-page Sandy coverage the publication's longest-running commitment to in-depth news reporting. We have grappled, even disagreed, at times over how

best to present industry news that isn't about fun and games, but it was clear to both of us that in this tragedy there were lessons to be learned and human stories to be told, as well as hard-earned triumphs to be documented and celebrated.

In addition to Kim and Gary, I thank **Will Mo-rey**, outgoing chair of the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions**, for taking an early leadership role and following through in the storm's wake; all of the IAAPA staff who have made contributions to both AT's coverage and the industry's recovery; and the many amusement operators — from the greater **New York City** metro area, **Coney Island** and **Keansburg, N.J.**, on down through **Seaside Heights** and **Atlantic City** to **The Wildwoods** — who shared stories and photos with me even while reaching out and assisting each other. You inspired this journalist to keep seeking the silver lining in the lingering "clouds."

Importantly, the challenges of Superstorm Sandy have brought a new degree of maturation to the amusement industry, to *Amusement Today* and to those of us who — just a few fleeting decades ago — forged our connection to this business as, well, joyfully shrieking enthusiasts.

As you'll see on pages 72 and 73, much work remains to be done in the Northeast and our monitoring of it will continue. I encourage everyone to keep lending a hand and words of support to our industry friends who are still making their way back. We're all in this together.

# AMUSEMENT

Your amusement industry NEWS

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**Tuesday Oct 22, 2013**

**★FEATURED TODAY: Holiday plans**

Even though summer on the 2014 season will total \$8 million, the park and a host of "Since 2006, when we received and name it the Mayfly." "We chose the anniversary that our new ride for attraction, which will be swinging in an arc 54 feet." [Featured Story](#)

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

**★New Boardwalk**

It took longer than expected, Undertow, despite the park's considerable, and a long opening. Boardwalk spokesman Kri week. The Boardwalk plan when the park goes into [Featured Story](#)

**★Iconic Kiddieland Carousel Heading To Auction**

Chicagoans whose first amusement park experiences happened especially interested to know the carousel from the former Midway will be heading to the auction block next month. Donley Auction Services will be selling the 88-year-old merry-go-bidder as part of a 300-item auction Nov. 16 at Donley's Wild. The carousel was built in 1925 for Kiddieland by the Philadelphia [which was the largest and longest-running amusement park in the](#)

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INSIDE

Massive fire takes out what Sandy could not: FunTown Pier goes up in flames...Page 34

OCT. 31, 2012

WWA officials expecting good turnout for annual show while planning for Asian show in 2014

Convention, show attendees await lots of sunshine

OCT. 31, 2012

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## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

•**1907:** The park men of the country got together for the first time to discuss and exchange ideas, to the benefit of all involved. The **Park Men's Organization**, an early group of park leaders, assembled in New York on November 14, at the Imperial Hotel. Representatives from most of the major parks from the Eastern portion of the country, gathered for a day of meetings and discussions regarding the relatively new industry. In attendance were owners and managers from **White City**, Trenton, N.J.; **Casino Park**, Toledo, Ohio; **Idlewild Park**, Richmond, Va.; **Luna Park**, Scranton, Pa.; **Kennywood Park**, West Mifflin, Pa.; **Luna** and **Altro Parks** in Albany, N.Y.; **Electric** and **River View Parks** in Baltimore, Md.; **Lagoon Park**, Ludlow, Ky.; **Luna Park**, Scranton, Pa.; **Noremberger Park**, outside Boston, Mass.; **Island Park**, Easton, Pa.; **Boyden Heights Park**, Providence, R.I.; **Union Lake Park**, Millville, N.J. and **Golden City**, Canarsie (Brooklyn), N.Y.

Discussions included securing the best bands and vaudeville acts, attractions, marketing, landscaping, employment, transportation, managing large crowds, restrooms (particularly for women and children), first aid, the removal of bad elements and possibly having a central bureau to contain all information for parks to share. (*Billboard* Magazine would become a clearing house for this list). After much discussion the name **NAPA (National Amusement Park Association)** was created, and a committee to draft bylaws and a constitution was organized. An initiation fee of \$50 and an annual dues of \$25 was determined. NAPA lasted a few years and it wasn't until early 1917 that the **National Outdoor Showmen's Association (NOSA)** was created (the precursor to the present day **IAAPA**) in Chicago, Ill.

•**1907:** The **Traver Engineering Company** was ordered to sell its concession contracts for over 20 **Circle Swings** by the bankruptcy courts of New York in early November. A week later, **Harry G. Traver** explained the bankruptcy process in *Billboard* magazine claiming a difficult economic climate during the recent recession. At a creditors meeting held November 15, the assets of the division were sold to **J. W. Ely** of Richfield Springs, New York, which included 19 Swings.

•**1921:** **Miller & Baker** announced in late November that they would remodel the **Mountain Ride** at **Forest Park Highlands**, in St. Louis, for the 1922 season. Originally designed by **John Miller** in 1909, the estimated \$15,000 repair would provide another eight seasons of service, according to the company. Miller would later suggest that most coasters were built to last about 10 years. The park's **Racing Coaster** had also been remodeled in 1921, adding two new drops. Miller said that the park gained 40 percent more ridership on the updated coaster, creating additional profits.

•**1924:** In mid-November, **Traver Engineering Company** announced plans to build several **Bobs** coasters, including the **Detroit Bobs** in **Palace Gardens**, Detroit, Michigan, the **Cyclone** at **Revere Beach**, outside Boston, and the **Wildcat** at **Pontchartrain Beach Park**, outside New Orleans, Louisiana. This was all after the company's construction of the **Bobs** at **Riverview Park**, Chicago, Ill..

•**1956:** The November 26 edition of the *New York Times* carried an article about a new housing complex to be constructed on the site of the former **Luna Park**, Brooklyn, N.Y., which had closed in 1946. Construction began in early 1957 and would eventually provide middle income housing for the growing city. Today it is a five-building residential cooperative complex, housing about 6,000 in almost 1,600 apartments. One of the largest high rise apartment complexes in the state, it overlooks the **Cyclone** and the new **Luna Park** built on the site of the former **Astroland**, opened in 2010.

—Compiled by **Richard Munch, NRCMA historian**

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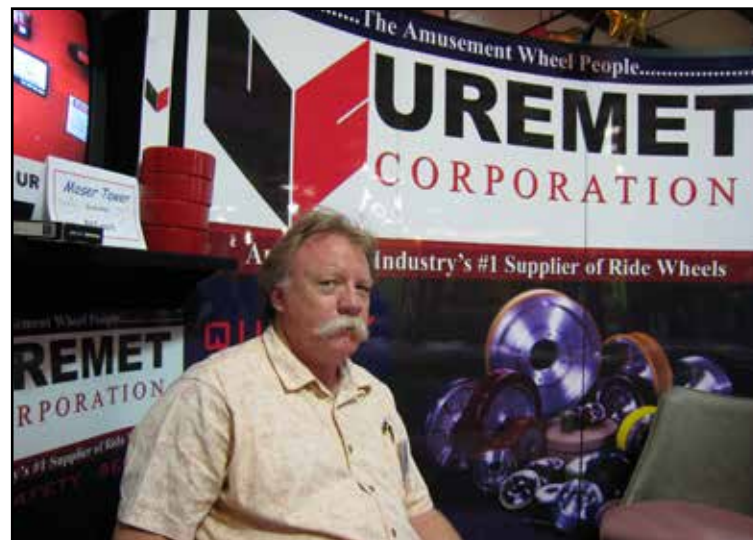
## 2 MINUTE DRILL



STORY: Janice Witherow

### Mark Moore, Uremet Corporation

Mark Moore founded the Uremet Corporation in 1992, and in its early years the company primarily processed urethane for a wide variety of applications in the aerospace, electronics, food processing, mining, oil, gas, transportation and wastewater markets. Today, Uremet is the leading provider of amusement wheels servicing nearly 300 rides at 70 amusement parks and for 12 ride manufacturers. Moore's focus is on research and technology development with a customized approach. He lends his expertise as a Board Member of the National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives, and when not working, Moore enjoys his passion of aviation.



Mark Moore, founder and president of Uremet, as seen at his Uremet Corp. booth at the I.I.S.F. Gibtown show in Florida. AT FILE

#### Title

President, Founder and Partner.

**Number of years with Uremet Corporation**  
22.

#### Best thing about the industry

The people. All of our customers and the guests of the parks.

#### Favorite amusement park ride

Well now ... the ones that use wheels of course!

**If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be ...**

Working in aviation. Aviation has always been a large passion of mine.

#### Biggest challenge facing our industry

Keeping up with the advancement in technology.

**The thing I like most about amusement park season is ...**

The time I get to visit the parks and enjoy the good times the guests are having.

#### Favorite kind of sandwich

Tuna.

#### My ideal day off is spent ...

At the airport playing with airplanes.

#### Favorite holiday

The December holiday season. I enjoy the change of mode even today with the season being so commercial.

**If I was lost in the woods with nothing but an army knife, I could make a ...**

A log cabin ... although very slowly! But first and foremost would be a fire for warmth and to process food.

#### I feel most comfortable when ...

The job is done.

#### My mother always told me ...

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be."

#### If I could watch only one TV show, it would be ...

TV ... no thank you!



Moore

#### The last time I went swimming was ...

This past summer. I live just a three-minute walk to the beach. I am not really a water person even though I live in a very beach/surfing/scuba diving-centered community. But I do enjoy being on the beach after work and relaxing as the sun descends into the ocean.

#### Do you eat out or cook at home most often?

This is about a 50/50 deal. Traveling so much for work rather precludes eating at home! However, when I am at home I do like to cook a healthy meal.

#### Favorite drink in the morning

Coffee! A little bit of coffee and no one gets hurt.

#### Favorite fall activity

Flying (it's that aviation thing again) in the cool air.

#### What part of the day do you feel most creative?

I am a creative person; I would have to say the early morning.

**Are you: a spontaneous soul or do you have to have everything mapped out?**

That would depend on who you ask. I would say I am spontaneous; however, I have learned in business this is not always a good feature, so I do like to have a detailed plan.

#### My childhood ambition was to be ...

In electrical engineering and aviation.

#### Steak or seafood?

I prefer seafood.

**If I could have any celebrity as a neighbor, it would be ...**

Jessi Combs (racing and speed enthusiast and adventurer with her own TV show "All Girls Garage"). She actually lives up the coast a bit from me, and we are working on a project together. She is setting the female land speed record right now!

#### Favorite childhood movie

Honestly, I have no clue.

#### When it comes to college football, I cheer for ...

The underdog every time!

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## ► CAROUSEL

Continued from page 1

Leanna, made tracings of them and we repainted the original stencils prior to the Carousel's 100th Birthday.

### Making carousel music

No authentic wooden carousel is truly complete unless it is equipped with an organ to provide traditional musical accompaniment. Knoebels feels strongly about this and has provided its machine with not one but a full trio of classic organs.

The Grand Carousel's largest organ was manufactured in 1888 by Frati and Co., Berlin, Germany. It was originally a barrel organ, playing a large printed cylinder like a music box. In the 1920s it was converted to play the more versatile paper roll system, which uses 61 key Artizan rolls.

The smaller organ on the outside of the carousel was built in 1910 by the German firm of Gebruder Bruder Co.

### FAST FACTS

#### Name/Park

Grand Carousel/  
Knoebels Amusement  
Resort, Elysburg, Pa.

#### Type

Hand-carved four-row  
wooden carousel

#### Figures

63 Horses (27 jumpers/36  
standers) three chariots

#### Band Organs

Frati and Co.,  
Gebruder Bruder Co.  
Wilhelm Bruder

#### Ride Refirbishment

Dave Wynn & Matt Wynn  
(Knoebels employees)

#### Operation

- North Beach,  
Long Island, N.Y. 1913 - ?
- Riverside Park,  
Rahway, N.J., ? - 1941
- Knoebels, 1944-present

#### Original Manufacturers

- George Kremer  
North Beach, Long Island  
(machine)
- Charles Carmel,  
Brooklyn, N.Y. (horses)
- Charles I.D. Looff  
(chariots)

—Source: Knoebels

## ► The wait is over: Knoebels opens Flying Turns | Pages 30–32

(Style 107) and was sold in the U.S. by Bernie Organ Co. of New York. It still plays the folding cardboard music available only in Europe. The organ and all its music were extensively damaged during the 1972 flood when it was in the center of the carousel. Both the organ and music have since been restored.

The third organ is currently located in the center of the carousel. It is a Wilhelm Bruder organ (Model 79) and was originally with Philadelphia Toboggan Co. carousel No. 41, which operated at Ross Farms (Pittsburgh) and in Wildwood, N.J. In 1977, that carousel was sold at auction and broken up while the organ moved to Clementon, N.J. with PTC carousel No. 49. In 1994, that carousel was also broken up and Knoebels purchased the organ. Sometime prior to 1957, it was converted to a Wurlitzer 125 duplex roll system. The organ was overhauled in 1996.

### Maintaining history

Keeping the Grand Carousel in proper working order is no easy feat and, due to its age, it requires significantly more vigilance than most of the park's other rides. For more than 40 years, this task has fallen to longtime Knoebels employee Dave Wynn.

AT spoke with his son, Matt Wynn, who, along with his father, has been instrumental in keeping the Grand Carousel consistently running well and looking great. "My dad, Dave Wynn, has been a full-time [Knoebels employee] since 1972. He's the caretaker of the Grand Carousel, Haunted House, and Cosmotron. He inspects them and fixes anything that's broken or could be polished up," explained Wynn. "He's in charge of horse refurbishing — repairing, sanding down, and repainting a number of them every winter during the off-season so that they're all done every few years. It keeps them nice and shiny and in good condition since they're over 100 years old now. He's also the park's expert on the band organs. He maintains the three at the Grand Carousel as well as the one at the smaller S&G carousel, and the Wurlitzer across from the Phoenix."

"I was brought on in 2011 to start repairing and repainting the old canvases that adorn the center mechanism, and I cleaned the rounding board paintings," continued Wynn. "I had just graduated college and nobody wanted me so you might say the whole restoration aspect of the carousel was to give me something to do. 'See a need, fill a need.' After the flood I painted the new stencil patterns on the woodwork. These were originally yellow shapes on a red background but they were painted over sometime before 1959. Even with years of paint on top of them, you could still see some of the beveling of the original shapes, so they were traced around 1988 and used in 2012. I scanned the designs and tweaked them for symmetry, which made their application a little easier. I printed them out, cut the shapes by hand into Mylar sheets, and then used those sheets to apply paint to the woodwork. Due to complications with 90-degree angled surfaces, the stencils themselves didn't work out too well and I ended up having to hand paint over each little shape in six different colors. I estimated around 25,000 shapes on the rounding boards, cross beams, and sweeps. It was an ambitious effort for something that went mostly unnoticed.

"The year 2012 also saw the beginning of other restorations around the ride — the 'gingerbread' wooden scroll work adorning the sweeps was discovered to not have original paint on it, so I was allowed to repair and repaint them. So far I only have 13 of 18 of the bottom pieces done. Which is a lot considering that's three pieces to each sweep, double-sided, and I'm only one person and I can't do any of them while we're still technically open. Once all 18 sections are done, I'll be half-finished because then I'll get to do the top pieces! But enough was done so that it looked better than ever this year. Also a painting from around 1975 featuring the carving of horses was redone — I filled in the cracks on the original Homasote and painted over it painstakingly to stay true to Matt Rusnak's creation. This painting was made to decorate



Above, the Grand Carousel's largest organ was manufactured in 1888 by Frati and Co., Berlin, Germany. Below, over the last three years the Grand Carousel has been undergoing a major restoration and refreshment under the guidance of father and son team (and Knoebels employees) Dave and Matt Wynn. COURTESY KNOEBELS



the blank enclosure for the Frati band organ, which itself took a beating in the flood and had to be refurbished along with the horses. I had a hand in that as well.

"We knew from oral tradition that the carousel was built around 1912. One of the original rounding board paintings, which are covered up with Masonite scenes made in 1953, features the signature of 'A. Wolfinger' and '1913.' Since nobody ever kept any records in those days, that's as official as we can get. Wolfinger was a known banner painter from Coney Island, and those guys had to work hard and fast to make ends meet. It's not unreasonable to assume he painted them around the same time the carousel was built and that they needed not wait too long for him to finish to ship the whole ride out. The ride itself was made from a recycled Looff machine which was modified to fit jumper horses which came from the shop of Charles Carmel. What the carousel was before 1913 or how old it truly is, we don't know. Everything we know about its origins is due to the signature panel featuring Kremer's Carousel Works and that signed rounding board scene and the date of 1913. Thus, we celebrated 100 years in 2013. The painting that bears this proof was retired and replaced on the carousel. It was restored along with several others

signed by A. Wolfinger and we displayed them during the 4th of July celebration in their restored state complete with replica frames and decorations," concluded Wynn. "These will be put in the carousel museum this winter and will be available to the public next season."

### Acknowledging historical value

The Grand Carousel has always been popular with the park's guests but it has also garnered plenty of attention and admiration from carousel enthusiasts and historians. In 1995, the National Carousel Association presented the Grand Carousel with a Historic Carousel Award.

"Today, we realize the historical treasured value of this piece of Americana and we are willing to expend great time, effort and finances to preserve this magnificent machine," said Dick Knoebel. "I am proud of the dedication of so many talented individuals involved who also relish in its preservation and operation."

The Knoebel family affectionately refers to the Grand Carousel as the "heart and soul" of the amusement park. It has been an integral component of the Knoebels experience for nearly 70 seasons. It's a safe bet that those proud horses will continue their gallop to the organ's merry tunes for many years to come.



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# INTERNATIONAL

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## Adventure World Australia to add new Gerstlauer coaster

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
[amellor@amusementtoday.com](mailto:amellor@amusementtoday.com)

PERTH, Western Australia — A major new roller coaster from German ride manufacturer Gerstlauer is the highlight of the new season at Adventure World in Australia.

The AUD \$12 million (U.S. \$11.4 million) attraction, called Abyss, was due to open this month and features an unnerving and eerie theme of ancient druid guardians of the all-powerful Abyss which encompasses the whole area around the ride. The landscape features 30, 9 foot (3 meters) tall guardians scattered throughout the mysterious terrain and massive upturned trees with exposed roots create a spooky underworld at-

mosphere. The theming was also the inspiration behind an online game, The Chosen Ones, a team-based treasure hunt with a money-can't-buy prize for two teams who got to be the first riders on the new coaster at the official launch event, among other prizes.

An intimidating themed arch looms above the entrance to the ride, creating a feeling of impending doom, while ancient stone statues and a foreboding themed soundtrack add to the setting.

Abyss is the single largest investment at Adventure World since the park opened in 1982 and is a custom-built version of Gerstlauer's Euro-Fighter coaster. It features a unique 10 story high vertical



**Adventure World's new Abyss coaster features a 10 story vertical climb and a more than 100-foot vertical drop.**

COURTESY ADVENTURE WORLD

lift, a more than vertical 100-foot drop, giant G-force turns and head spinning twists. The attraction also incorpo-

rates four inversions through daylight and a secret dark ride section, as well as a zero-G roll, rollover loop, cobra

roll and in-line loop. The total track length is 630 meters (2,067 feet).

Shortly before the opening of Abyss, Adventure World CEO Mark Shaw commented: "We think the name reflects what is going to be a white-knuckle ride filled with trepidation of the unknown, the likes of which visitors to any theme park in Australia won't have experienced. And we're absolutely thrilled to give eight fearless riders the opportunity to be in the first carriage at the VIP and media launch event, simply by playing The Chosen Ones online."

Adventure World opened for the 2013/14 season on September 26.

## Interlink Super Flume opens at PowerPark



ALAHÄRMÄ, Finland — Water ride specialist Interlink provided a new Super Flume boat ride at Finland's PowerPark for the 2013 season. The new attraction opened in July and was designed and manufactured by Interlink to fit into a specific area of the venue.

Named Kwai River, it takes its theming from the iconic World War Two film *Bridge Over the River Kwai*, starring Alec Guinness, with each of the boats used on the ride being named after a character from the film. The 1,312-foot-long Super Flume features two lifts and two drops. It utilizes a total of

nine, six-seat boats, providing an hourly capacity of 600 passengers.

The ride is situated in a new area of the park and has been integrated into an existing bridge structure, hence the theming, something that provided an additional challenge to the Interlink design team. The soundtrack from the *Bridge Over the River Kwai* film is used throughout the ride and not only is the bridge a major theming backdrop but it is also used to access a new Thai restaurant at the park. Views from the bridge are spectacular and give visitors a bird's eye view of the new attraction and other areas of the park.

The Kwai River flume is proving a very popular addition to the ride lineup at PowerPark for which Technical

► See FLUME, page 8

**Water ride specialist Interlink completed and opened a new Super Flume boat ride at Finland's PowerPark for the 2013 season.**

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## ►FLUME

Continued from page 7

Manager Petri Sariola commented: "We wanted to add a big new water ride to the park and having looked around at what was on offer from different suppliers we chose the Super Flume from Interlink. It has been very popular with our guests since opening and will no doubt help to increase our visitor numbers overall. Interlink have been very good with all aspects of the installation and overcame any initial teething problems that occurred. It is a really good addition to the park."

Interlink Managing Director John Hudd added: "This has been an enjoyable project to work on. It threw up some interesting design challenges which we successfully overcame and we are very happy with the end result. Clearly visitors to PowerPark are also very happy as it's been popular with riders from the first day of opening and I'm sure it will continue to be so for many years to come."

Along with various models and sizes of log flume, Interlink's line of water rides includes the Rapid River, Water Battle, Shoot the Chute, Spin Boat and kiddy and junior flumes, all of which allow the company to cater to different customer requirements and a wide range of age groups.

• [www.interlink-lg.com](http://www.interlink-lg.com)

# Maurer Söhne, Raven Sun Creative offer new immersive dark ride solution

MUNICH, Germany — Renowned roller coaster supplier Maurer Söhne has teamed up with the specialists at Raven Sun Creative to produce Saturn V, a spinning coaster/dark ride hybrid that offers riders an immersive experience. Saturn V represents a unique offering for regional parks seeking a cost-effective dark ride attraction that delivers a high performance, high impact experience.

In the past, attractions that delivered cutting-edge immersive experiences have been beyond the reach of regional parks. The minds at Raven Sun Creative and Maurer Söhne saw this as a surmountable challenge whose solution could take location-based entertainment to a whole new level. Their collective experience designing award-winning projects for industry leaders like Universal Studios has given them the insight, expertise and resourcefulness to create and deliver a powerful product at a modest price. The two firms collaborated on the Saturn V attraction with exactly that aim.

The moment guests enter the queue at Saturn V, they step into a captivating vision of the future and a

story where they are the heroes. This is Space Command Launch Center, an immersive sensory environment, and guests are intrepid star pilots sent on the adventure of a lifetime: a thrilling journey across the cosmic frontier to Saturn. The pre-show areas combine futurist architecture, themed lighting, sound and music, multi-media imagery and effects to put guests inside a vivid and involving world.

When guests board the ride itself, they are blasted off on a high speed thrill ride on a state-of-the-art spinning coaster through a dazzling dark ride environment that simulates a trip through our solar system using physical sets, lighting, special effects and 540-degree environmental projection. On their journey to the rings of Saturn and back to Space Command, guests spin and dive around planets, through asteroid fields and starscapes—even crashing through the heart of a crystalline comet along the way. Not only does Saturn V treat riders to an unforgettable experience, but the freely rotating motion of the cars means no two journeys are the same, adding a special element of repeatability for guests.



German roller coaster supplier Maurer Söhne has teamed up with the specialists at Raven Sun Creative to produce Saturn V, a spinning coaster/dark ride hybrid that offers riders an immersive experience. After an engaging pre-show, riders blast off on a high-speed state-of-the-art spinning coaster through a dazzling dark ride environment that simulates a trip through our solar system using physical sets, lighting, special effects and 540-degree environmental projection. COURTESY MAURER

Drawing from a wealth of knowledge by being involved in the creation of some

of the most innovative and acclaimed theme park projects in operation (Transformers: The Ride 3D; Hollywood Rip, Ride, Rockit), Raven Sun and Maurer Söhne conceived Saturn V to be economically accessible without compromising quality, dependability, thrills, theming, or story. Designed to meet the rigorous demands of long-term use while delivering a strong return on investment, the attraction offers both ease of maintenance and operation. An added element of scalability enables owners to customize Saturn V to suit individual budgetary and capacity needs. The flexibility of the ride space and show elements allow for the exciting possibility of adapting and refreshing the attraction over time.

The initial previews of Saturn V at the Asian Attractions Expo and Euro Attractions Show earlier this year were a major success. Raven Sun and Maurer Söhne are also showcasing the attraction at the IAAPA Expo in Orlando.

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# New entertainment and leisure venue set for Venetian island

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

VENICE, Italy — A new project which will see the transformation of one of the islands in the sea around Venice in Italy into a high quality entertainment center has been announced.

Well-known Italian ride manufacturer Zamperla has revealed that in conjunction with the Venetian University Ca' Foscari it has conceived plans to create a cultural and entertainment facility on the island which is currently abandoned but is the site of a former waste incinerator and rubbish dump.

The project, which will create a new tourist hub for the city, calls for the recovery, requalification and improvement of the San Biagio Island

to transform it from its present state into a place that will provide a host of leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities, a variety of work opportunities and a place where the natural environment is considered and protected.

To be aimed at both local residents and tourists, the project will see the creation of facilities including theaters, bars and restaurants, exhibition spaces and other leisure offerings, all accommodated in three dedicated areas. The natural/ecological area will feature the scientific recreation of a Barena, a typical lagoon environment with a variety of flora and fauna, while the historical area will include an educational and entertainment itinerary which will take visitors through the history of Venice.

A third area, the Venetian Carnival will incorporate shows, parades and a range of entertainment options suitable for all ages. A green park area will also be created and the project will bring an economic boost to the area through the related construction work and the more than 500 jobs that will be created once the project is up and running.

Zamperla CEO Alberto Zamperla noted: "The amusement district we developed in Coney Island, New York, is a clear example of how quality entertainment venues — besides providing families the opportunity to spend a day together having fun — can provide cultural insights, generate jobs and work as a catalyst for the whole area. Having the possibility to work on a similar project in Venice for me is a



**The San Biagio Island in Venice is set to be transformed into a major leisure destination with a host of entertainment facilities. COURTESY ZAMPERLA**

dream because I have always loved this city with its history, its democratic roots and its cultural vocation."

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# Vulcania opens new Volcans Sacrés dark ride

*Jora Ent. developes theming, ride/show controls; ride system and vehicles from ETF*



The recently opened Volcans Sacrés at the Vulcania park in France takes visitors on a journey themed as a lava flow underground. COURTESY ETF

**STORY:** Andrew Mellor  
amellor@amusementtoday.com

AUVERGNE, France — The French edutainment park Vulcania added a major new dark ride for the 2013 season, bringing another fun, educational element to the venue that is all about the legends and myths surrounding volcanoes around the world.

Situated in Auvergne in southern central France, Volcans Sacrés (Sacred Volcanoes) represents the largest ever investment by the park for an individual ride at €4.4 million (U.S. \$5.9 million). It was created with theming and other input from Jora Vision and its subsidiary Jora Entertainment, while the ride system was supplied by ETF Ride Systems.

Volcans Sacrés covers an area of approximately 600 square meters (6,458 square feet) and incorporates six separate scenes. It is located within the main building of the park and takes guests on a five-minute journey along a lava flow created by video projectors installed at various intervals along the route to provide the illusion of floating on the lava in an underground tunnel.

The ride vehicles, themed as boulders, are ETF's trackless Multi Mover vehicles, each accommodating up to six passengers and equipped with colored lighting. Eight wire-guided vehicles have been supplied with the technology used combining a system of sensors installed at the base of each one and an electrified guide wire embedded in the floor. The system transports the vehicles through all six rooms of the ride along a 130-meter (427-foot) long track and provides for greater freedom of movement for the vehicles, such as forward and then backward from one scene to another, or moving around in circles in the same room.

Each vehicle can also rotate 360 degrees and they are all equipped with rechargeable batteries and sensors to avoid collision with an object or a person on the circuit. Theoretical hourly capacity is 500 riders.

Jora Entertainment was responsible for the show control system used on the ride and also for other technological input such as lighting, special effects, audio, animated characters and décor, all of which is geared towards providing an immersive experience for each visitor.

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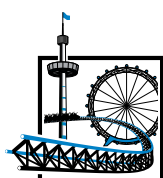


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## New Premier Rides coaster planned for Holiday Park

HASSLOCH, Germany — In July 2014, Holiday Park plans to open a new roller coaster unique to Europe.

The thrill coaster features numerous exciting elements — catapult launches, cool rotations/twists, extreme forward and backward accelerations, vertical drops and breathtaking loops. The highlight is a slow motion roll at a height of approximately 150 feet. The passengers are slowly turned upside down by a twisted heartline roll high above the treetops and experience intense moments with unique views before they speed down into the station with speeds of up to 62 mph.

Roller coaster fans will experience forces up to 3.5 times their own body weight by means of the unique magnetic launching technology. After the final drop the train returns to the start, where it is gently decelerated for the last time and comes to a standstill at the station.

Approximately €8 million (U.S. \$10.8 million) will be invested in this brand-new coaster. A structurally identical roller coaster, Superman Ultimate Flight at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom in California, has been filling park guests with enthusiasm since 2012.

The new coaster is being supplied by Premier Rides of Baltimore, Maryland, best known for their innovative launched coasters.

Holiday Park Manager Bernd Beitz says, "After the substantial investments and new constructions in Holiday Park during the last two years the construction of this Europe-wide unique thrill coaster is a further step towards an attractive adventure-oriented restructuring of the park. We are looking forward to the new attraction! It is the long-desired thrill coaster roller coaster fans have been waiting for. This gigantic steel coaster is the ideal supplement for our park and provides pure action with its varied highlights."

## Record-breaking numbers enjoyed by Gröna Lund during 2013 season

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Not only did the amusement park in Stockholm, Sweden, celebrate its 130th anniversary, but it also set a ground-breaking record in visitors for the 2013 season. With more than 1.5 million guests in 2013, Gröna Lund has managed to increase their yearly attendance by 50 percent in only 5 seasons.

On September 29 Gröna Lund closed the doors to the best season in the amusement park's history. With a record-breaking 1,500,380 visitors, Gröna Lund has increased the number of visitors by 50 percent since 2008. In addition to these ground-breaking numbers, the amusement park sold more season passes than ever before and had nearly 10 million rides in the park's various attractions.

"We knew we had an exciting season to look forward to when we opened in April, with great concerts, our 130th anniversary and our new at-



In 2013 Gröna Lund enjoyed its all-time record attendance year with more than 1.5 million visitors visiting the park. COURTESY GRONA LUND

traction, Eclipse — Europe's highest [Funtime] StarFlyer. But to have reached an all-time high when it comes to the number of visitors is absolutely incredible. All the investments we have made in recent years in new attractions, food and beverage, the park scenery, entertainment and our staff have really paid off. I'm thrilled to see that so many people share my love

for Gröna Lund", says Magnus Widell, CEO of Gröna Lund.

Prior to the 2013 season, Gröna Lund had invested more than SEK \$70 million (U.S. \$10.8 million) in the park and since 2006, SEK \$464 million (U.S. \$71.7 million) has been invested in new attractions, food and beverage and park scenery.

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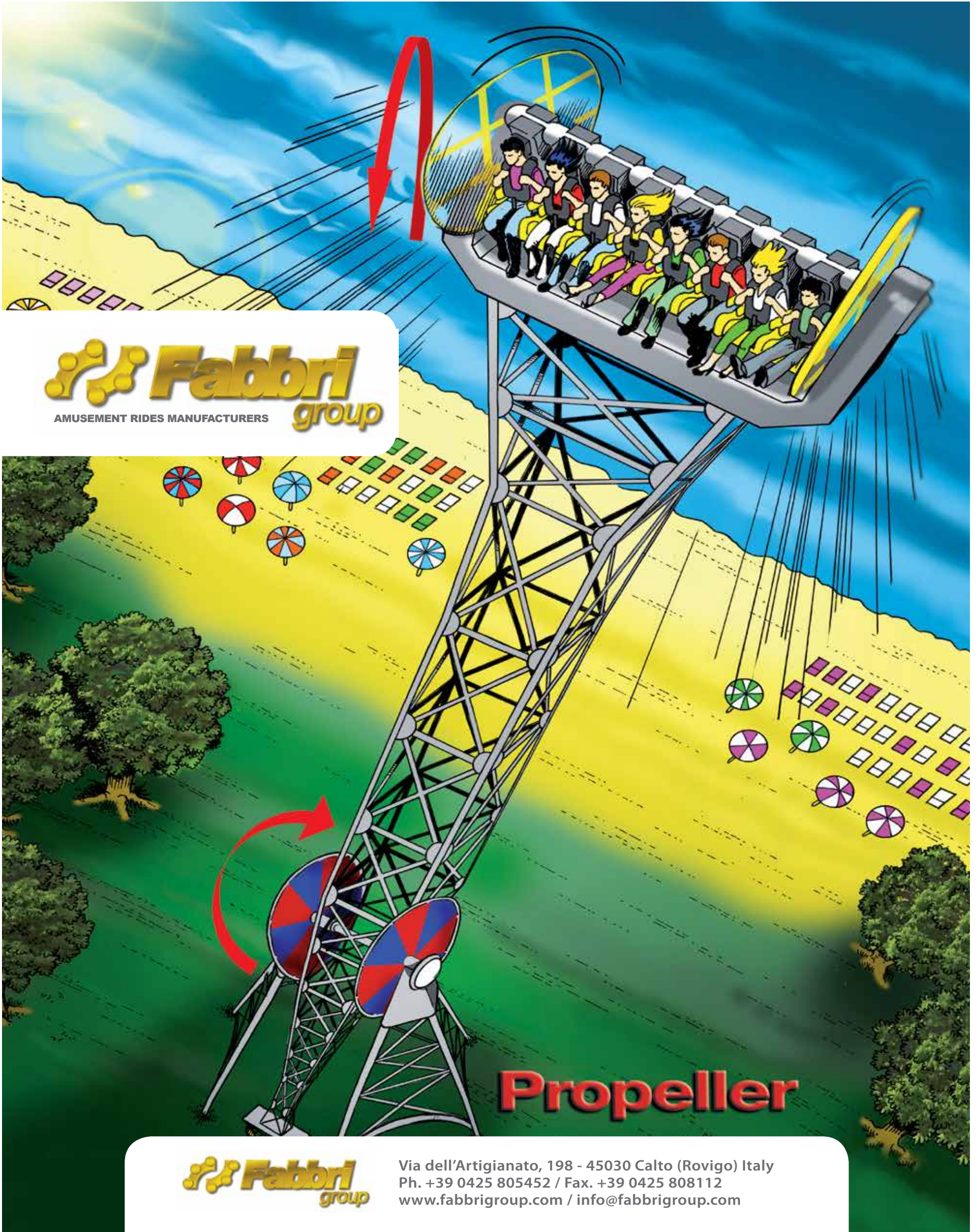
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# Central Europe - A look back and what's on the horizon

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin  
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PHOTOS AT/TIM BALDWIN  
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

A lot of activity has been taking place scattered along Central Europe. Some additions have been minor, while others are qualified as high-profile attractions to really boost attendance. *Amusement Today* takes a look at an assortment of parks across this region, from either personal visits this past July or from research and information provided by the parks.

## Toverland, Sevenum, the Netherlands

Arguably the most impressive growth in 2013 could be the abundance of additions at Toverland. Founded in 2001, the park has grown exponentially both in attendance and in attractions. Since the addition of Troy, a Great Coasters International, Inc. (GCII) wooden coaster built in 2007, the park typically passes the half million mark in terms of attendance. While these figures may seem

rather modest for some parks, it makes it all the more remarkable that Toverland added eight new attractions in a single season for 2013. [An in-depth report on all these additions will come in our next issue.]

Among the eight new attractions is a new Hafema rapids ride and a Mack spinning coaster. Both of these high-profile rides are themed quite creatively. It is easy for guests to become engaged and get caught up in the magical flair.

Teun Borst, Toverland Communications, says, "We have the ambitions to grow, not only in the number of visitors, but also the size of the park." When *AT* asked how the new installations affected attendance, Borst adds, "Really, really well. This summer in July and August, we received 50 percent more visitors than last year and July 31 was the best visited day in our history. That



**Above, Arthur — In the Minimoy's Kingdom attraction opens at Europa-Park in 2014. At right, an expanded front entrance featuring the Hanseatic trading cities debuted at Germany's Hansa Park.**

COURTESY EUROPA-PARK AND ALEX DICKEY

day we received around 11,000 visitors. The old one-day record was 6,500 visitors."

Toverland has a unique park layout in that numerous attractions are located indoors in two large buildings, while several larger attractions are spread around the property. The new additions added an expansion area four hectares in size.

## Efteling, Kaatsheuvel, the Netherlands

Since opening in 1952, Efteling has grown from a fairytale forest (which still delights children today with 28 distinct fairytales) into one of the most enigmatic and thematically enchanting theme parks in the world.

Currently, the resort offers a resort hotel, an 18-hole golf course, a holiday park village with numerous cottages in a natural setting and the Efteling Theater, one of the largest theaters in the Netherlands. A new production, "Mr. Sandman," written exclusively for the theater has recently started this past September and the fairytale musical runs through March 9, 2014. Since 2010 the park has remained open all year round. The previous production was "Fairytale Tree — The Musical." It was themed around the park's 2010 installation, the Fairytale Tree. The musical is now on tour throughout the Netherlands and Belgium. When introduced in 2010, the Fairytale Tree stretched out its canopy 13 meters tall and 13 meters wide and personally greets children



**Toverland's many new additions included this creatively themed Hafema rapids ride.**



**The arena show Raveleijn, which includes this fire breathing beast, saw re-investment this year.**  
COURTESY KEITH KASTELIC



who approach him before telling them a story. Twenty new stories were on offer in 2013 for the Fairytale Tree, which encourages children to stomp or puff along.

Also seeing new life in 2013 was a rejuvenated Raveleijn arena show. The updated spectacle took the story that originated in 2011 and has added more effects and stunts. These include live ravens and horses, stunts, and new effects based on fire and water. All this takes place in an open-air arena culminating in a battle against a five-headed monster.

Introduced in 2012 and continuing in popularity is Aquanura, the third largest fountain show in the world.

## Hansa Park, Sierksdorf, Germany

A new entrance expansion is the most striking of Hansa Park's 2013 changes. While the 4D cinema had two new features for guests, it is the sixth section of Theme World: The Hanseatic League in Europe that will be the most lasting addition. To the left of Holstentor brick gate at the park, which reflects the architecture of one of the sole remaining brick gates in the world in nearby Lubeck, is new architecture at the entrance representing the Hanseatic trading cities of Lubeck, Copenhagen, Bremen, Frankfurt am Main, Goslar and

Nuremberg. Guests with a passion for history will find the new entrance an enduring attraction for many years.

## Europa-Park, Rust, Germany

Although 2013 wasn't an enormous capital year, appropriately following the massive one-two punch investments of 2012 — the marvelously popular GCII Wodan Timbur Coaster and the beautiful Bell Rock resort hotel, there were still additions. Michael Mack comments, "The expansion of the Enchanted Forest was received very well and we saw a significant increase of visitors in this area of the park. With the opening of our new indoor attraction, Arthur — In the Minimoy's Kingdom, in April 2014, the redesign of this beautiful spot of Europa-Park with lots of old trees and a little river will be finished. We are very excited!"

In regard to the new ride, *AT* asked what can guests look forward to? "Our guests can look forward to the most intricate indoor attraction in the entire history of Europa-Park," says Mack. "A gigantic world adapted from star director Luc Besson's smash hit movie trilogy Arthur and the Invisibles. It will feature a ten-meter-tall children's free-fall tower shaped like a red poppy, a large slide area, a 'mul-mul' carousel with adorable round, fluffy white creatures and, of course,

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## ►EUROPE

Continued from page 14

the 550-meter (more than 1,800 feet) long dark ride, which is a world premier attraction from Mack Rides." Mack explains, "Our guests will fly through seven fantastic kingdoms in rotating cars suspended below the track. Many high-tech special effects along with the dynamic ride which allows us to accelerate and slow down throughout the track will create a one-of-a-kind experience."

When *AT* asked how construction was going, Mack replied, "It is looking good. Construction is on time, and a few weeks ago we already closed the tracks of the dark ride." He predicts: "We will open the attraction with the beginning of the summer season on the 5th of April, 2014."

Currently, Europa-Park is the strongest contender for overtaking the top spot for Best Park in *AT*'s Golden Ticket Awards. In 2013, they came within less than one percent of grabbing the gold.

### Phantasialand, Brühl, Germany

Following popular additions in 2011 and 2012 with its Maus au Chocolat interactive shooting dark ride provided by ETF and Verrücktes Hotel Tartüff, a fun-house-style attraction designed by the park's own engineers, Phantasialand continues with its thrills based toward families.

The removal of the park's previous flume took place more than a year ago. A hard winter has caused a delay in the newest flume and is now set for a 2014 opening. This newer up-



Phantasialand recently added a whimsical fun-house style attraction. COURTESY ALEX DICKEY



Top photo, Majaland at Holiday Park delights little ones with larger-than-life thematic objects. Above, Holiday Park's dramatic new entrance is engaging.

dated version is provided by Intamin. A model on display this past season showed a highly themed attraction with the ride embedded within mountains and canyons.

### Holiday Park, Hassloch, Germany

Visitors to Holiday Park will find a theme park in transition. Opened in 1971, the park has been acquired by the Plopsa Group in recent years. A gradual transformation of Holiday Park has introduced the popular Plopsa animated characters into a solid presence throughout the park. Whether it be mascot characters, signage, shows or themed attractions, the Plopsa brand is clearly the direction in which the park is heading. The investment is impressive.

Guests who have visited in past years and now make a return visit are struck by a dramatic and engaging new entrance. A fanciful and beautiful new gate sets the stage for new adventures during the day. The results are indeed quite stunning.

Even more so is another recent expansion. Rivaling the beloved Seuss Landing at Universal's Islands of Adventure, Majaland centers around Maja, the Plopsa bee character. Eleven attractions take bug-sized objects and make the proportions larger than life. The theming is

particularly grandiose upping the cool factor to a whole new level for the younger set. New and re-themed rides include several in which parents can ride with children.

In addition to enjoying rides, opportunities for kids to splash and get wet can help cool things down on a warm day.

On the horizon for 2014 is a return to high-profile thrills. A 150-foot tall Premier launch coaster (similar to the one at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom) will debut next season.

### Skyline Park, Bad Wörishofen, Germany

Adrenaline is the name of the game at Skyline Park. While there are several family rides, thrills command the skyline. Expansion, which seems to be happening at a dramatic rate, is geared to heart-pumping excitement.

New in 2013 was Sky Spin, a relocated spinning coaster manufactured by Maurer Söhne. Originally the coaster was Whirlwind at Camelot Park in the U.K. That park has since closed. Now operating at Skyline Park, the freshly painted coaster is seeing new life and gives Skyline Park four complete circuit adult coasters.

### Heide Park, Soltau, Germany

For the 2013 season, Heide Park offered guests "Mada-

gascar Live!" which is geared toward family audiences. The circus theme of the show was based on the film *Madagascar 3*.

Bigger news is on the horizon for the park as it introduces its second B&M coaster for the 2014 season. The as-yet-to-be-named coaster will be of B&M's latest genre, the wing coaster. It will be the first for Germany.

"This is a real novelty," says Thorsten Berwald, project leader for Heide Park Resort. "Our wing coaster leaves no time for relaxation. It is a hair-raising thrill right from the start." The ride will feature five inversions and a track length of 772 meters (2,533 feet). Of the eight flight maneuvers incorporated into the ride, near-misses with bridges and other obstacles will be one of the biggest thrill factors incorporated into the layout design.

"We aim to offer our guests

more ground-breaking experiences, and that is why we are investing €15 million in Germany's first wing coaster", says Sabrina de Carvalho, chairperson of the executive board. "This is the largest investment in our 35-year history as a theme park." The new coaster is expected to open on March 29, 2014.

### Erlebnispark Tripsdrill, Cleeborn, Germany

In a manner of speaking, Gerstlauer comes full circle in 2013. The manufacturer's first coaster, G'Sengte Sau, opened at Erlebnispark Tripsdrill in 1998. For this past season, the company noted its 50th coaster, again at Tripsdrill.

And the connections don't just end there. Other similarities are in play. Like G'Sengte Sau, the coaster opened first. Apparently the park feels of-

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Skyline's Park new Sky Spin was manufactured by Maurer Söhne.



A rendering of Heide Park's new B&M wing coaster layout is shown above. At right, the "Madagascar LIVE!" production showcased the characters from the popular animated movies.

COURTESY HEIDE PARK





## ►EUROPE

Continued from page 15

fering the ride to the guest is the most important thing, but the work doesn't stop there. Erlebnispark Tripsdrill is highly regarded as a creatively themed park with much attention placed on whimsical and creative detail. The rapids ride is themed to laundry, the flume delights visitors riding in bathtubs, and several other rides are themed to the wine country and surrounding area.

G'Sengte Sau, once built, was intertwined later with a castle-like building that also

interacts with the beloved log flume themed to bathing. The park's newest coaster opened mid-summer in early July. During AT's visit, it was clear that the important thing was to get the ride open. With a knowing wink, the clever "theming" during the summer was workers painting and constructing the station. Mannequins could be seen "building" the station house and surrounding area. A wagon outside the ride placed a model on view showing the elaborate theming that is yet to come, which contains a station partially built underground.

Called Karacho, this newest coaster exemplifies all that

is best in Gerstlauer's repertoire. While classified as a Euro-Fighter, the vertical lift here is gone and replaced with an exhilarating underground launch. Undeniably Gerstlauer's sharpest vehicles to date, the futuristic compact eight-seater cars whisk through multiple inversions smoothly with no over-the-shoulder restraints. The ride is just shy of 100 feet in height and 2,300 feet in length. Riders hit speeds of more than 62 mph. If one could pick a special installation to be a milestone project, Gerstlauer has hit a home run with Karacho for its 50th.

### Freizeit-Land Geiselwind, Geiselwind, Germany

Located in the Bavarian countryside of Germany, Freizeit-Land Geiselwind originally opened in 1969. Over the years it has grown considerably in terms of rides and animal attractions. For 2013 the park added three new attractions. Geisterfahrt Zur Holle is a colorful dark ride in which passengers ride in two seat vehicles. Also new at the park were Elvira's 4D Mystic Castle motion theater and a Ghosthunter show.

### Prater, Vienna, Germany

The Prater in Vienna features the city's second most notable icon, the large Ferris wheel called Wiener Resienrad. Although the wheel has suffered severe damage over the past century due to wars, it's iconic status remained important to the people of the city, and its reopening after World War II showed signs of improving times.

Today the public park features numerous rides, restau-

rants and attractions. Many owners and operators offer entertainment diversions for the public and tourists making it somewhat of a permanent fair. During AT's visit in late July, a brand new flume appeared to be a couple of weeks from opening, although a manufacturer or owner was not able to be determined during the hours of the visit.

### Vidámpark, Budapest, Hungary

Unfortunately, not all things are bright on the horizon. Economic troubles have forced the closing of Vidámpark (which translates to Hap-

py Park). During its peak in the 1970s, the park entertained more than 2.7 million guests during the summer season. Time and disrepair took its toll and attendance dropped to about 300,000 annually.

The one bright spot is the wooden scenic railway, Hülámvasút — one of the rarest coasters in the world, will remain. It will survive the park's demise. The current park area will be expanded into the neighboring zoo by 2016, and the coaster will then hopefully be in operation within those grounds. A few other rides considered historically significant could also be saved.



Gerstlauer and Erlebnispark Tripsdrill team up again, this time for a high-profile launched coaster called Karacho.



A new dark ride called Geisterfahrt Zur Holle was one of the new additions to Freizeit-Land Geiselwind in 2013. COURTESY ALEX DICKEY



Above, A new flume ride for Prater was being constructed during the summer of 2013. At right, the massive Ferris wheel at Vienna's Prater known as Wiener Resienrad is one of the city's most noted icons and continues to be popular among visitors and local residents.



Although reports indicate Vidámpark in Budapest will sadly be closing for good, the 1926 historic scenic railway roller coaster and a few other historically significant rides may remain.



## IE Park/SOLI Bumper Cars introduces new Maxxi Racer Circuit themed cars

REGGIO EMILIA, Italy, — IE Park/SOLI Bumper Cars has added further to its extensive line of products with the introduction of the Maxxi Racer Circuit.

The company's latest attraction features an elevated, B-shaped, electrified track similar to a bumper car floor and using a floor pick-up power system to drive the vehicles.

The vehicles themselves are also a brand new design, part bumper car and part go-kart, and are based on the company's Maxxi adult bumper car. Each one has a number of special features including adjustable, four-point safety belts as well as high back seats that can be moved forwards and backwards to suit the height of the rider, the first time this type of seat adjustment has been made available on such vehicles.

The speed of the cars is varied within different sections of the track and the operating system only allows them to be stopped in a specific pit stop station area for loading and unloading purposes.

Adding further to the racing theme of the attraction, typical grand prix style barriers feature all around the track, along with transparent walls, while the track can also be customized to suit client requirements.

"The Maxxi Racer Circuit has been one year in development and we are delighted with the end result," said IE Park/SOLI Bumper Cars Aales Director Andrea Munari. "We have utilized our expertise in bumper car tracks and in the design and development of bumper car vehicles to create a totally new attraction which I am sure will prove to be a popular addition to our product range. It is basically an adult ride but is also suitable for children of a certain height so will appeal to operators of a wide range of venues."

The first example of the new attraction has been installed in the RamRoma FEC operated by the Al Mogren Group at the Marina Mall in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. "We have been very pleased with the performance of the Maxxi Racer Circuit and the additional business it has brought

us," said Abdul Moshen al Mogren. "It is a very innovative attraction with some excellent new technical characteristics that are easily recognized by riders of all ages. We will certainly be using IE Park/SOLI Bumper Cars again for future investments in our venue."

IE Park/SOLI Bumper Cars has added the new Maxxi Racer Circuit to its extensive line of products. The first example of this new hybrid bumper car has been installed at RamRoma FEC in Marina Mall in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

COURTESY IE PARK/SOLI



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## Ride Entertainment Group unique in strategic financial partnerships

STEVENSVILLE, Md. — The Ride Entertainment Group has continued its expansion by opening several new revenue share partnership sites in 2013 and at the same time is celebrating the second year of operating amusement park attractions.

"It is a very exciting time for us," said Ed Hiller, CEO of the Ride Entertainment Group. "Our revenue share division is flourishing. In addition, we have continued to branch out and are excited to be able to offer our park operations services to ownership groups and municipalities."

Entertainment Finance Group (EFG) works with amusement parks, water-parks, zoos and municipalities to provide revenue share partnerships on amusement rides and outdoor attractions. "We are not a financing company in the traditional sense," said Adam Sandy, the Ride Entertainment Group's chief business development officer. "We work in strategic financial partnerships. This means we assume the cost for the ride hardware and an installation team. In turn, our partner can choose their level of involvement in the installation, operation, and maintenance of the attraction depending on the resources they would like to allocate to the project. Our goal is to provide to our partners the possibility of maximum thrills with minimal capital outlay."

The type of attraction is dependent upon the needs of the client. For instance, at a traditional theme park, EFG will often offer an upcharge ride like a Skycoaster or Slingshot. At zoos and other unique facilities the company offers a mix of attractions. At the Toronto

Zoo EFG installed a stand-alone carousel and a ropes course, at the Columbus Zoo they revenue-shared all of the zoo's family rides installed for the 2008 Jungle Jack's Landing expansion.

Sandy stressed that the company is more than just a financing group. "We are staffed with experts from the amusement industry that are part of every project," he said. "EFG provides consulting staff to help with ride installation, marketing, and operations. The goal is to ensure that every installation is a success for us and our partners. With

► See REG, page 22



Stevensville, Md.-based ride Entertainment Group continues its expansion by opening several new revenue share sites. Partnerships for the Slingshot (above left) and Soaring Eagle Zipline (above) continue to show increased interest. Below, REG's newest installation is at the Toronto Zoo. COURTESY REG



REG's Ride Operation Group's expanded property, Fantasy Forest at Flushing Meadows now includes this kiddie himalaya ride (above) and carousel (left). COURTESY REG



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## Marvel, Hero Ventures announce new super hero themed experience



LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Hero Ventures, a Los Angeles based entertainment company, has announced that it is teaming up with Marvel Entertainment to create “The Marvel Experience,” an innovative, traveling experience, featuring dozens of Marvel’s iconic Super Heroes. This attraction will appeal to a multi-generational audience and will leverage state-of-the-art

interactive and multimedia technology, including a 4D motion ride and original 3D animated features, allowing fans to be a part of the action. The tour comes to life in 2014.

Founded by sports and entertainment industry entrepreneurs Rick Licht and Doug Schaer, Hero Ventures is dedicated to producing unique themed entertainment experiences. Solidifying the manage-

ment team are Michael Cohl, former Live Nation Chairman and legendary live event impresario, along with his *Spider-Man: Turn Off The Dark* co-producer and PRG founder Jeremiah “Jere” Harris, who will serve as lead producers. The team is rounded out by co-founding partner Jason Rosen.

The Marvel Experience is a first-person Super Hero adventure in which audiences step into the Marvel Universe to become a part of the story and the action. Innovative tour elements include a one-of-a-kind, traveling dome complex the size of two football fields developed exclusively by Hero Ventures. In addition to the 4D motion ride and 3D animated features, other components will include digitally projected animation, motion-comic origin stories, virtual reality and holographic simulations, original merchandise and integrated social media touch points all carefully woven into the rich narrative story line.

“Hero Ventures is developing a themed entertainment concept that we expect will be a transformative, traveling destination that will deliver to fans and families an exciting, groundbreaking and unique experience,” said Marvel’s V.P. of Business Development, Sean Haran.

The characters and stories of the Marvel Universe are beloved around the world by ages young and old as seen with the recent global box office records for Marvel’s *The Avengers* and Marvel’s *Iron Man 3*.

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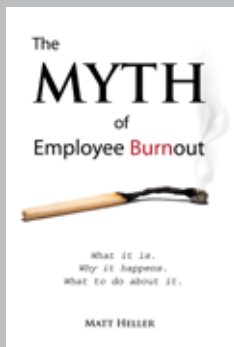
PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMUSEMENT TODAY



## New book addresses real causes of employee burnout

ORLANDO, Fla. — Employee burnout is not new, nor is it specific to any one industry. Many leaders have noticed that while employees typically start off strong, somewhere along the line the motivation wanes, and productivity and morale start to slip. The question is ...why?

In his new book, *The Myth of Employee Burnout*, Matt Heller outlines his quest to get past the myth and uncover the true situations and circumstances that lead to an employee being unmotivated and unproductive. He uncovers that the usual suspects of causes are really not to blame,



and that what leaders really need to do is take a good look in the mirror.

*The Myth of Employee Burnout* explores how every facet of the employee lifecycle (from recruiting to termination) can play a role in determining if an employee will continue working at a high level or not. Heller then gives practical and strategic steps a leader can take in order to reverse the effects of burnout, or eliminate it altogether.

The books can be purchased at the IAAPA Book Store, on Amazon or at [www.performanceoptimist.com](http://www.performanceoptimist.com).

## ►REG

Continued from page 19

over 30 attractions worldwide we have a great track record of helping our partners raise per-caps at their properties."

The revenue share division has grown so large that the parent company opened a new division, Ride Operations Group (ROG), to handle running amusement parks and attractions. David Galst, managing director of the Ride Operations Group, has grown this division significantly in the past two years. With nearly a decade of amusement industry experience under his belt Galst has overseen ROG's strategic expansion. "We currently operate four carousels along the East Coast. Two in New York, one in Boston, and another in Baltimore," he said. "In addition, we own attrac-

**"Our revenue share division is flourishing. In addition, we have continued to branch out and are excited to be able to offer our park operations services to ownership groups and municipalities."**

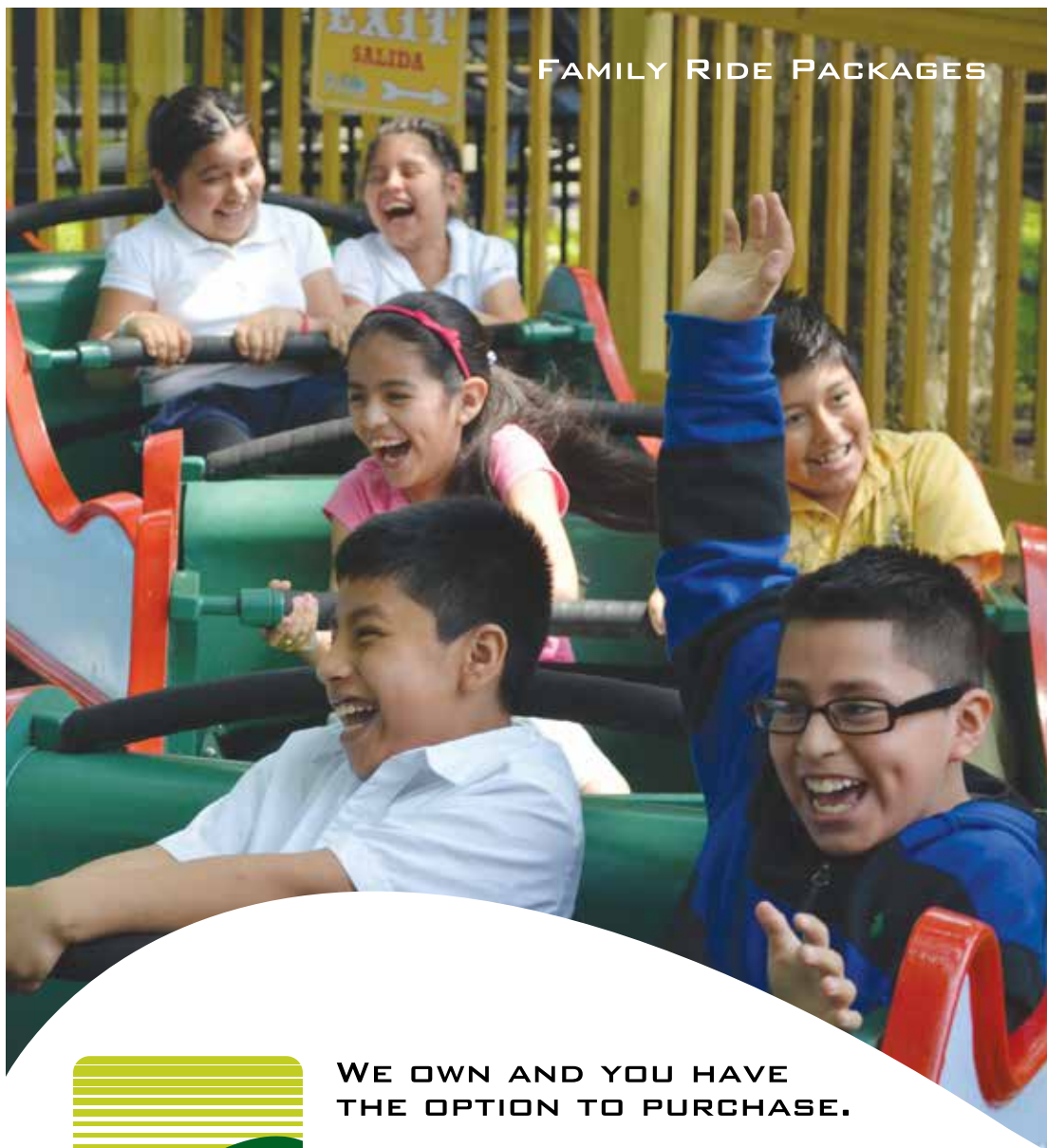
—Ed Hiller, CEO,  
Ride Entertainment Group

tions and run Fantasy Forest, a family amusement park that encompasses the historic Flushing Meadows Carousel."

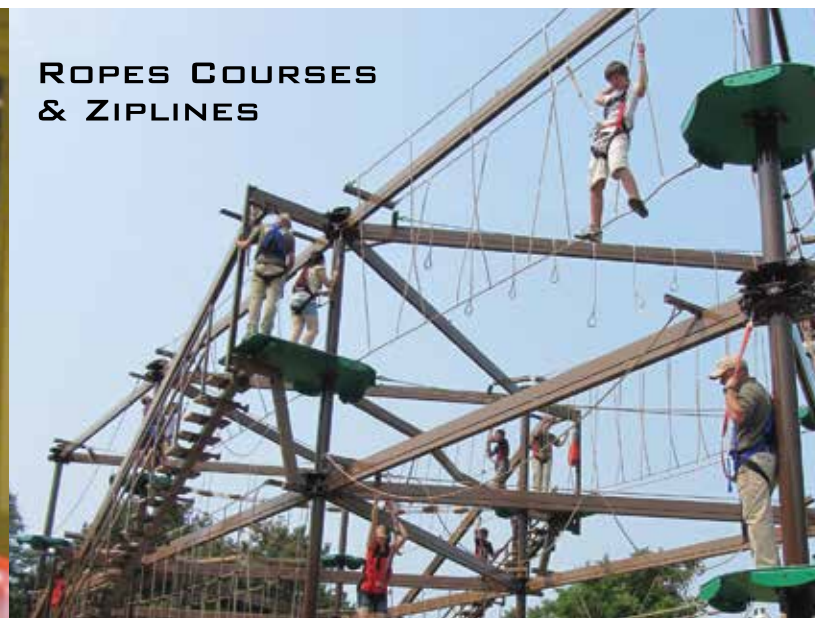
Galst said his operations team is currently speaking with several parks and municipalities about growing their operations base substantially over the short term. "There are a lot of groups looking for talented operators and we are

excited about the prospect of running many more properties within a few years. We pulled together an experienced team at the Ride Operations Group team to satisfy that need and have been thrilled with the response. We cannot wait to see what the future brings."

For more information visit: [www.RideEntertainment.com](http://www.RideEntertainment.com).



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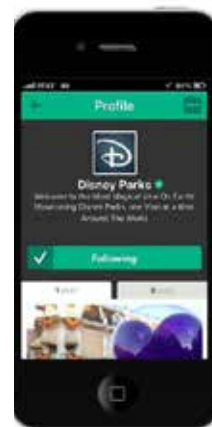
## Disney Parks launch new user-generated video contest

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Everyone has a Disney side. It comes out when they let loose at a Disney park, celebrate their inner pirate or princess, and meet Mickey Mouse again and again. Launched Oct. 1, Disney Parks is giving social media-savvy theme park fans a new way to celebrate their Disney side with the launch of an official Disney Parks Vine account, which will feature both original and user-generated video content.

Disney Parks will celebrate the account's launch with a "Vine Your Disney Side" contest that encourages Viners to create six-second films that celebrate their unique interest in Disney theme parks, characters and more. Vine users who create videos that show their Disney side can include the tag #DisneySideContest for a chance to appear on the Disney Parks' Vine account. Selected videos will begin appearing on the channel Oct. 7, with each featured filmmaker selected receiving \$1,000. The creator of each video featured will also receive the chance to win a vacation to Disneyland Resort or the Walt Disney World Resort and a \$10,000 commission to create a series of Disney side videos.

"We're excited to announce our presence on Vine and believe this channel is a great fit considering the fun spirit of our parks and resorts, which serve as amazing locations for visual storytelling," said Christie Volastro, vice president of Global Digital Marketing for Disney Destinations. "We're looking forward to using this channel to showcase original Vine content and recognize Disney fans by sharing some of the most creative Disney Parks inspired user-generated content out there."

For more information on the "Vine Your Disney Side" contest and to see the entire list of rules and regulations, visit DisneySideContest.com.



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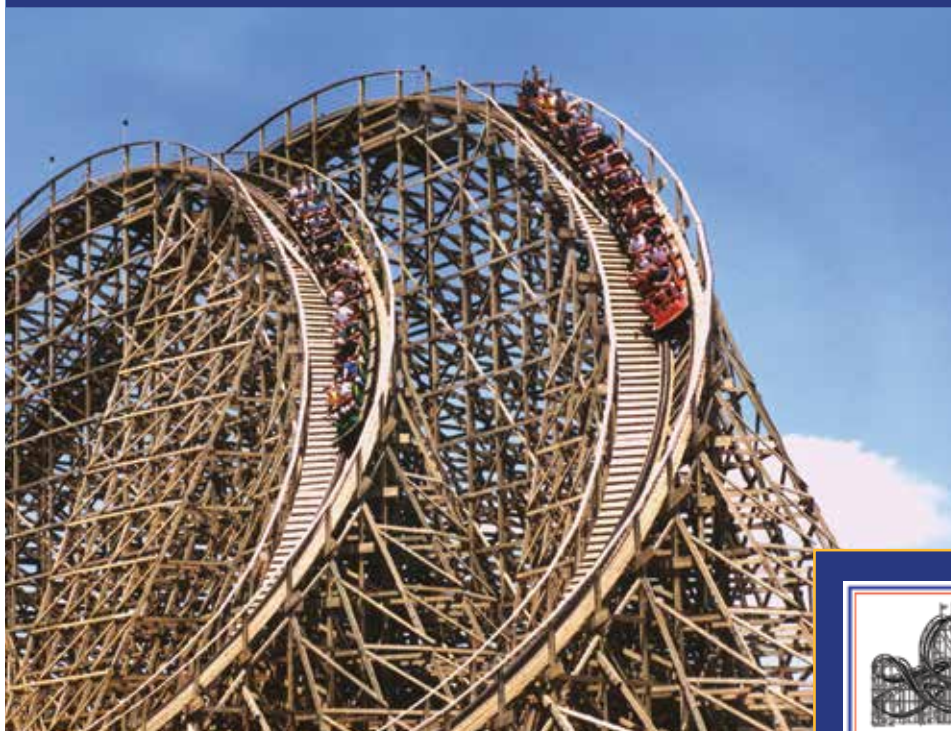
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# La Ronde's Aqua Twist puts a spin on water fun

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin

tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

MONTREAL, Quebec — La Ronde, part of the Six Flags family of theme parks, has put in a first for North America. The park's new Aqua Spin is a new Twist 'n' Splash from Mack Rides. The installation is putting an interactive guest experience in the patron's very hands.

Aqua Spin features nine gondolas resting within a rotating platform. Once boarded, each gondola of six — making for a total passenger capacity of 54 for each ride — lowers into a pool, with the floor disappearing into a few inches of water. Grouped in pods of three, the gondolas begin their journey by rotating within the entire attraction as well as individually. The most engaging part of the ride is the interaction not only between riders, but also spectators as well. Each seat is equipped with a water pistol that allows riders to take aim at nearby assailants on the Aqua Spin, as well as onlookers on the midway surrounding the ride. However, many of those bystanders are armed with water pistols firing back. The ride's continual motion makes for an ever-changing hilarious confrontation. Once the ride cycle is complete, the Aqua Spin's platform raises up out of the water and guests easily disembark onto dry ground. But don't be surprised to see them head toward a water pistol along the midway.

Water attractions have long held their place in the industry. The log flume celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, and Old Mills and Shoot-the-Chutes date back even further. As parks look to add new innovative ways to utilize water in amusement parks, this new direction from Mack Rides easily fits the bill for a wet experience.

Bob Dean of Leisure Labs, which represents Mack Rides, points out, "Our patented Twist 'n' Splash rides now come in two sizes (14 meter and 17 meter) and they are both considerably less costly to purchase and open than similar interactive track and trough-style rides."

Ride requirements are 52 inches to ride alone, but smaller children over 36 inches may ride with an adult. Water



**Interactive water fun is abundant on La Ronde's Aqua Twist as both riders and park guests aim to squirt each other.**  
AT/TIM BALDWIN

utilized on the ride is 378,788 liters (just over 100,000 gallons). The diameter of the ride area is 20 meters (65 feet).

Pleasure Beach Blackpool opened the first Twist 'n' Splash in 2011 at the England seaside park. Two other installations followed: Etnaland (Italy) and Slagharen (the Netherlands). When asked if any advancements have been made since the first installation, Dean adds, "Twist 'n' Splash has a new and improved drive system and the subsequent installations are fabricated to make the free floating boats spin more in the water. There are a number of other smaller improvements."

A noticeable component to the ride experience is the continual change of people at which to take aim. The ride's rotation places combatants in range of other floating gondolas as well as the outsiders standing along the perimeter. Once the ride begins passersby are often caught unaware to find themselves quickly in the line of fire. This seems to add another layer of laughs to the entire Aqua Spin experience. "Aqua Spin is a fun-filled, engaging family ride that is totally representative of what La Ronde stands for," says Park President Phil Liggett. "This new attraction is making for an exciting season for guests of all ages."

"One of the most amazing things about Aqua Twist is the guest interactions it creates," adds Frédéric Boulva, Park Operations, Security and Entertainment Director of La Ronde. "I saw people who did not know each other ending



**On the Mack Rides Aqua Twist, the ride is shown here in operation in water, above, while the platform rises above the water during the load/unload process.**  
AT/TIM BALDWIN

up eating lunch together after water battling on the ride."

Boulva also believes people develop strategies to their plan of attack. "There are tons of ways to ride Aqua Twist. Some guests team up with their friends in the same boats to spray fellow passengers while others split in different boats to battle each other. Still yet others have a few friends go the by-standers way and splash their friends in the ride using the water pistols located outside. What makes it really unique is that you can have as much fun looking at it as you can riding it. It's guaranteed fun!"

"One of my favorite things about Aqua Twist is that the spray from the water



guns on the boats can reach well out into the midway," smiles Liggett. "While the ride is loading, people assemble along the railings to watch and try to figure out what this new ride is. Then to their surprise, when the ride starts they are getting wet pretty quickly and jumping back in a hurry. Favorite targets of people are, of course, management or anyone wearing a tie."

La Ronde has the bragging rights of having the first

such ride in North America. It would be no surprise to see this innovative new water attraction surfacing throughout the globe. "Given the number of inquiries and the order flow world-wide, we are looking forward to seeing Twist 'n' Splash in dry parks and water-parks all over the world, says Dean. "Mack has taken the interactive water ride experience and condensed it into a small footprint while not sacrificing hourly capacity."



# International Theme Park Services, Inc. to represent Garfield

CINCINNATI, Ohio — International Theme Park Services, Inc. (ITPS), announced on Oct. 18 it has entered into an agreement with Paws, Inc. to introduce the iconic Garfield the Cat character to the domestic and international theme park industry. The comic strip of Garfield's daily life has been in publication since 1978 and holds the Guinness Book of World Records for the world's most widely syndicated comic strip. Garfield also has sold more than 135 million books, stars in a top-rated kids show on Cartoon Network, and has 11 million fans on Facebook.

ITPS has been retained to introduce Garfield as a highly popular and highly marketable character in the theme park industry. Garfield's presence will add to the fun and the fantasy experience theme park patrons enjoy by enabling visitors to encounter and interact with this much-loved character. The inclusion of Garfield and his doggy pal Odie will also allow theme and amusement parks to have a competitive edge in marketing efforts by offering brand identity.

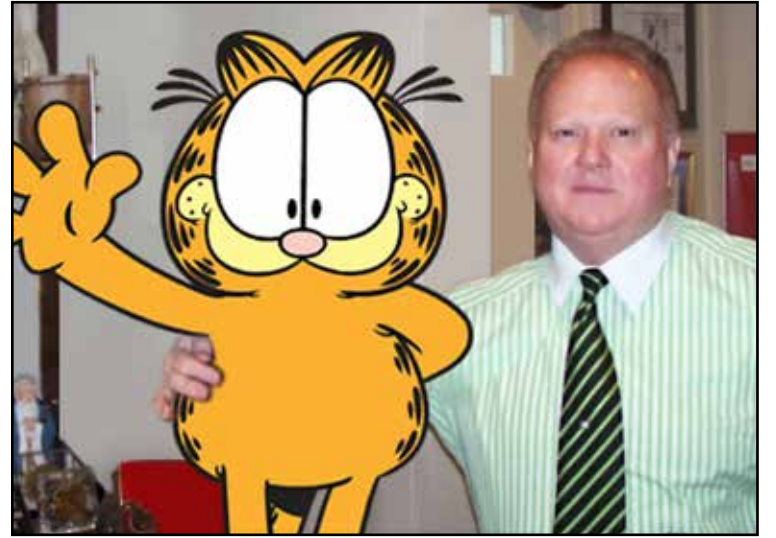
Jim Davis, creator of Garfield, said: "Few things are more fun than amusement parks, and fun is Gar-

field's middle name; uh.... Gar-fun-field. We are really looking forward to growing Garfield's presence in the theme park industry with the help of ITPS and my old friend, Dennis Spiegel. With our brand in their capable hands, we're confident that Garfield will be perfectly groomed to suit any venue's entertainment needs. We will be introducing the new program at IAAPA, and Garfield will be strutting his stuff. So, food vendors, don't say that I didn't warn you...."

Dennis Spiegel, ITPS president, said, "ITPS is thrilled to be representing Paws, Inc., licensor of Garfield and the Garfield characters. Their greatly entertaining and well-known character has an international presence and can, I believe, bring tremendous branding and marketing advantage to any theme park. We have already seen interest from several major players in the theme park world, and I can't wait to see the impact that Garfield has on our industry, not just in marketing but also in commercial appeal through merchandising."

ITPS has worked on more than 500 projects and in 50 countries since its in-

ception in 1983. Paws, Inc. was founded in 1981 by cartoonist Jim Davis as a creative house to support Garfield licensing. Today, the company, located in rural Indiana, handles not only the creative angle, but also the business concerns of the corpulent kitty worldwide. Paws, Inc. is a privately held company and the sole owner of the copyrights and trademarks for Garfield and Garfield characters. Known worldwide through comic strip, books, and feature films, Garfield's demand and presence stretches to 131 countries.



ITPS President Dennis Spiegel stands with his new best friend Garfield. ITPS now represents the popular comic strip character in amusement and theme parks through a brand licensing deal. COURTESY ITPS

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*After seven years in the making one-of-a-kind ride debuts*

# Knoebels Flying Turns opens, brings joy to first riders

**STORY:** Scott Rutherford  
srutherford@amusementtoday.com



ELYSBURG, Pa. — Knoebels Amusement Resort, a popular and well-respected family-owned and operated facility, is a park renowned for its creativity and resourcefulness. It is also a park known for doing the unexpected and seemingly impossible. Not only has it survived perennial floods that would've drowned a lesser park, it has taken on projects that were often deemed risky or imprudent. When others said it couldn't be done, they did it anyway. Among the park's most impressive accomplishments are: the relocation of a 1948-built wooden roller coaster from Texas, which was reborn as the award-winning Phoenix (1985); the recreation of an amped-up interpretation of Elitch Garden's outstanding Mr. Twister (Twister, 1999); and the transformation of an abandoned dark ride/coaster from the Jersey Shore (Golden Nugget) into the Black Diamond (2011).

So back in 2006 when Knoebels announced they were rebuilding an authentic version of the Flying Turns wooden bobsled that John Norman Bartlett made famous in the early 20th century, park fans rejoiced and the industry was intrigued. While there was plenty of excitement, the skeptics were also quite vocal. This was, after all, based on a ride that hadn't been built in over half a century. The last one (Coney Island's Bobsled) was torn down in the 1970s. Could they really do it? Should they do it? If anyone could make the Turns fly, it was Knoebels.

Others had attempted it. Germany's Mack Rides built a portable, short-lived wooden Bobsled in the 1950s though little information is available. The same company began offering a steel-troughed version (Europa Park's Schweizer Bobbahn) in 1985. Though they initially enjoyed some success, only six units have been built to date. The Mack version with its wide-radius turns and elongated ramps is a far cry from the compact, rapid-fire transitions for which the original Flying Turns were known.

Intamin gave it a go in 1984 with the introduction of their Swiss Bob. Again, this steel-troughed model was nothing like the actual Flying Turns of old. The five units produced used large multi-passenger cars that were more akin to actual bobsleds than the wooden coaster version.

Even ride pioneer Arrow Development attempted to produce a Flying Turns in 1979 but they only got as far as a fiberglass-trough prototype that was plagued with vehicle-design problems and eventually scrapped.

## Dick has a dream

As a young boy, Dick Knoebel had ridden the Flying Turns at Cleveland's Euclid Beach Park. This was the largest and arguably the most successful of the first generation of Norman Bartlett's rides. And Dick never forgot it.

According to Dick, longtime Knoebels employee John Fetterman happened upon a Flying Turns magazine article written in 2002 by Kim Pedersen (a coaster fan and ACE member who had experienced one of Europe's last surviving Turns in Denmark in the 1950s). Intrigued by the notion of a wooden bobsled (and aware of Dick's experience at Euclid Beach), Fetterman presented to the Knoebel clan the idea of rebuilding the classic attraction in 2005. With their penchant for preserving history and building one-of-kind projects, the OK was given and the endeavor began.

Working from surviving photos, videos and rare drawings of the original Flying Turns, Fetterman and the Knoebels settled on recreating a ride based on the Turns that opened at Chicago's Century of Progress in 1933 and was later moved to Riverview Park where it ran until that park closed forever in 1967. Loosely based on that ride (as well the Coney Island Bobsled, which was a mirror image), a layout



Above, this aerial view captures one of the three-car trains ascending the second and tallest lift hill.

Once over the top, the train reaches a top speed of approximately 24 mph as it climbs and swoops its way through the compact course. Right, aside from guide rails in the station area and on the lifts, the Flying Turns trains operate in a concave wooden trough, freewheeling through the 1,300-foot-long course like an actual bobsled.

AERIAL COURTESY JUSTIN GARVANOVIC; VEHICLE COURTESY JOEL STYER

and profile were designed to fit a plot of real estate in the center of the park that had once been home to two earlier roller coasters, a Schwarzkopf Jet Star and a Vekoma Whirlwind.

Construction on the Flying Turns officially began with the raising of the first bent in January of 2006 and progressed rapidly through the winter and early spring. A typical wooden roller coaster-style system of bents, cords and ledgers was built to support the trough. A skeleton of steel ribs formed the concave shape of the trough to which a wooden "sub-track" layer was attached. On top of this, teams of carpenters painstakingly affixed thin wooden strips that would make up the actual running surface. The amount of time and energy that went into this portion of the ride is truly astounding.



In July 2007, the first test runs were made with a prototype vehicle that was based on those that ran on the original Flying Turns. Featuring three axles, six caster wheels and a divided body, the vehicle made it successfully through the course but it was difficult to control and didn't perform as well as was hoped. Adjustments to the vehicle were made and by the end of the season, test runs with five-cars were attempted. Still, the ride wasn't performing up to the standards Knoebels requires. Though discouraged, the team

pressed on, troubleshooting and testing. By the end of the 2008 season, it was clear the ride was not going to open that year so they tried a different strategy.

## Call in an expert

Knoebels turned to renowned wooden roller coaster designer Michael Boodley to see if he could offer advice on how to "fix" the Flying Turns. Boodley is well known in the industry for being a master of wooden coaster engineering. As co-founder of much-

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respected Great Coasters International, Inc. (GCII), he had already designed a number of highly rated and expertly crafted wooden coaster projects during his career. Though officially semi-retired, Dick Knoebel convinced Mike to lend his expertise to the stymied Flying Turns team. So, he became a Knoebels employee and went to work.

"The Flying Turns project was already in progress when Knoebels contacted me in 2009. They found themselves at a 'stall' when they brought me in. They had taken it to a point where I was able to ride it, and I realized they were very close. I could see the potential for making it happen. I felt they needed to make slight changes to the trough and they needed a better vehicle that would make it through the course safely," explained Boodley. "I basically took that car and redesigned it to comply with today's ASTM standards. Still, it was too heavy due to structural analysis needs, and there were performance issues related to the three axles, which used caster wheels. The caster shaft has to be perpendicular to the surface on which it's rolling. And there's nothing flat on the Flying Turns. The problem with the three-axle car was that the shafts were always getting off the perpendicular and impeding the way the car naturally wanted to track."

So with the knowledge gained from the tests, a second-generation car was constructed, which was basically an evolution of the first one (six wheels, three axles). "I did a lot to try and improve its performance but it just didn't work. The car's nose was running too high in the turns," said Boodley. "You want the train to behave linearly. We actually had a number of modifications just playing with that design to see if we could get rid of some of that behavior. We did but it involved too much weight. That's when I was just ready to throw it out."

Discouraged but undaunted, Dick Knoebel consulted with Boodley and asked for his opinion on how they were to proceed. Seeing that Dick was not going to let this one



**Above, noted wooden roller coaster designer Michael Boodley enjoys a front seat ride on the Flying Turns. Boodley was a key member of the Knoebels team that made this recreation of the Flying Turns bobsleds a reality. Right, the ride utilizes a trio of three-car trains that each seat one or two passengers in-line.**

COURTESY JOEL STYER



go, Boodley found inspiration from his early days with GCII. "Clair Hain and I actually talked about building a Flying Turns. Back then, I thought about the ride, which is so complicated and has so many variables but we decided we would never build one because there was too much of a learning curve. Back then, after studying caster wheel behavior, the eight-wheel configuration we ultimately used on this ride was something I considered. I felt it would perform better than the original six-wheel vehicles. And it does."

"Dick asked how we should go about it. I said we should start out by prototyping the basic functionality of this wheel arrangement, see how it works, add weight, etc. He gave his OK; he really wanted it to work."

### Life intervenes

Due to personal hardships unrelated to the Flying Turns endured by the Knoebel family, Boodley and other team members, the process of bringing the ride to life stretched on further than any of them ever expected. This naturally led to unfair and undeserved criticism being directed toward

the park. But it didn't matter; the team had faith that they knew they would ultimately triumph.

The original test vehicle had a feature that turned out to be problematic. Because they then had an articulating axle with four wheels in the front and a solid axle in the back, Boodley was trying to get the front axle to steer the car toward center when it got off-center. "That was always going to be part of the first prototype vehicle. The first one actually had the steerable capacity on the front of it," said Boodley. "We had to adjust it. Running a three-car train seemed like that steerability was the best thing we could do. We started shuffling weight around and ultimately what happened with that steerability is that the train got too squirrely once we mixed up the weight. So the steerability actually ended up hurting us. This ride really has a narrow band of envelopes that have to work: the speed has to be right and the weight has to be right, otherwise it gets out of control. So the steerability was one of those variables that worked great under certain conditions but it didn't work

right under a wide enough array of conditions. So we threw it out. We finally decided on a typical articulated axle with four wheels on the front and four wheels on the back."

Originally, the park wanted to run five-car trains like some of the old Flying Turns. "We tested a five-car train with various speeds and such but this is a radical layout, the five-car configuration worked only when all conditions were perfect. When all the cars had the same weight, the wheels had the same lubrications ... but that's not the real world," stressed Boodley. "We'll be seating people with different weight and we had to come up with a train that worked with all possible variables. We tried a four-car train with various scenarios, but that just didn't consistently track the way we wanted it to."

"Bottom line: there's nothing to influence this ride other than the natural physics of our world. The three-car train has the ability, should it get imbalanced or out of synch for some reason, to stabilize back into synch once it goes through a horseshoe turn. The three-car train was the answer and we decided not to push the limit."

In addition to solving many of the train issues, Boodley elected to change some aspects of the structure itself. "The trough was revised in two areas. Again, there's no guidance on this ride so there's a timing issue," he explained. "The beginning of the run wasn't timed right so I had to redesign the second curve into the third curve. We also did some alterations to the third curve. The end of the ride had some changes in elevation that I chose to eliminate. We also rearranged the lifts, which allowed us to put in a big transfer track/work area. The original design had a planned work area but it could not really accommodate the trains like we wanted it to. To make that work, we altered the third lift."

### Open for business

After a protracted period of construction, revisions and tweaking, the world's only Flying Turns wooden bobsled finally received approval from Pennsylvania state inspectors in the early fall of 2013. During a special preview on the evening of October 4, Dick Knoe-

bel welcomed invited guests and thanked all those who had been a part of this epic project.

"This is a momentous occasion," said Knoebel from his perch in the ride's station during the preview event. "It's taken us seven years or more in getting this accomplished. There are a few people who need special recognition. John Fetterman came to my brother and me and proposed the idea of recreating a Flying Turns back in the fall of 2005. And here we are. It has not been easy. Fetterman started this project. He designed the track layout, all the superstructure along with Bill Kelly of Dynamic Designs in California. We got along so far but it wouldn't have been without the assistance of Jim Martini, and Mike Boodley's intervention in it. Many times we had to encourage Mike to stick with it. He did and today I can say, 'We've done it.'"

"Accolades go to many more than just the names I've mentioned. Lenny Adams of Structural Technologies built the superstructure. Clair Hain's Great Coasters International built our transfer track and maintenance work area. We had great cooperation from Larson International and Ash-Tech [Ashland Technologies]. It has just taken everybody including our staff. Everybody has worked hard on this, and we think you're gonna like the result. I only wish my wife was here to see this. But with that being said, I'm sure she's with us."

Dick then turned to Will Morey, chairman of IAAPA, who had flown up from Wildwood, N.J., to be there for the big event. "When I think of the words persistence, perseverance and determination ... and heart, there's a face that comes to mind," said Morey with a nod to Dick Knoebel. "This obviously took a lot of resources. This is a project that was at the heart of the industry. The creativity, energy and the effort that went into this by Dick and his family and staff and all the others mentioned ... I just have to say that IAAPA is so proud of what you all have done. Well, well done!"

Dick then instructed Jim Martini and Mike Boodley to open the gates. And with REO Speedwagon's freedom anthem "Time for me to Fly"

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playing in the background, Knoebels' Flying Turns finally took to the skies.

### Flying the Turns

Standing five-stories tall with a 1,300-foot-long course, the Flying Turns debuted with a trio of three-car trains that seat up to six guests each. Capacity will be increased with the delivery of a fourth train in time for the 2014 season.

The ride experience begins with potential riders arriving at the boarding platform and being weighed with inboard livestock scales that display the weight only to a computer. An attendant assigns them to one of three positions in the three-car train with the heaviest (not exceeding 400 pounds total with one or two people) being placed in the lead vehicle. Riders sit in-line (log flume-style) on the padded floor of the cars. A single seat belt restrains both riders.

Once the home brakes are

lowered, the train rolls out of the station and onto Lift 1. The following descending spiral, which serves to acquaint riders with the trackless nature of the Flying Turns, culminates in an energetic speed bump that deposits the train onto Lift 2. After attaining a height just over 50 feet above the midway, the train slips off the chain and instantly begins its wall-climbing acrobatics. First-time riders are understandably impressed at how quickly the ride gets up to speed. The incredibly fast changes of direction are surprising yet are accomplished with a phenomenal fluidity. Positive Gs and centrifugal force collide in an entertaining mix that can only be labeled as pure unadulterated fun. After completing a two-layer figure-8 and an extended S-turn, the train whips through one final curve and into the catch, a critical device that funnels the train to the center of the trough so it lines up for a trip through the transfer track/maintenance shed. A swooping 45-degree turn leads to Lift 3, which returns the train to the loading platform.

Technically speaking, the ride is a marvel of engineering and American ingenuity. The designers had to devise a coaster system that hadn't been attempted since the first half of the 20th century. And they had to create it completely from scratch as well as make sure it conformed to today's strict industry safety standards.

To accomplish this extraordinary feat, they outfitted it with a number of unique safety features, which are necessary due to the fact that, for the most part, the ride vehicles are basically freewheeling along the course like an actual bobsled. Unlike, most modern roller coasters that feature multiple sets of wheels that keep trains fully locked to the track, the Flying Turns is a much different animal. These designers had to account for this by building into the ride, especially the trains, a staggering number of redundant and overlapping safety systems.

The Flying Turns uses an Allen-Bradley control system that was programmed by Ed Ayan and Jim Martini. This system works in concert with a Bosch multi-screen video system to oversee all aspects

of the ride during operation. A total of 42 cameras, strategically placed around the ride, track the trains at all times and monitor the trough in case something should fall in that could potentially impede the train's momentum.

The trains themselves were manufactured and constructed by Larson International and Ashland Technologies utilizing urethane wheels provided by the Uremet Corp.

### Consensus

This Flying Turns recreation was never intended to be a knock-your-socks-off thrill ride. Knoebels has plenty of those. Compared to the early Flying Turns, which sported only the most rudimentary of safety features, Knoebels' version is a phenomenal achievement. Those who created it took as long as was necessary because they were determined to produce an attraction that was entertaining, reliable and, above all else, completely safe.

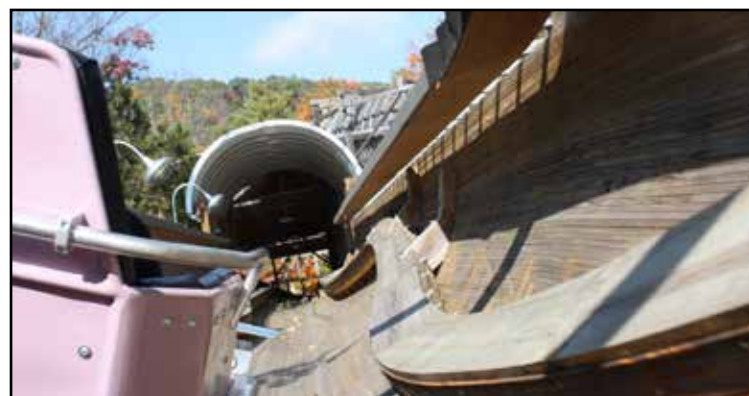
The experience itself is absolutely unique, especially when measured against the steel models produced by Intamin and Mack. Unlike those, Knoebels' wooden version is far more compact, which results in a ride that playfully toys with one's equilibrium from beginning to end. Surprisingly, the three-car trains are virtually silent as they traverse the wooden trough, gracefully swooping through the turns with ease. In fact, the only real sound is that of delighted riders. Instead of screams of terror, the Flying Turns elicits from its passengers spontaneous bouts of laughter and uncontrolled giggles. When the train completes the final curve and slithers into the brake run, applause and smiles are the result.

Virtually everyone at Knoebels wears a variety of hats and works in multiple capacities. From the beginning, park employees Ron Berkheiser, Jim Brophy and Jim Martini were very involved with the Flying Turns. *AT* spoke with Martini, who found himself in a position that equated to project manager, about how he feels at the end of this journey. "I have ridden the Turns many times in its various forms and it's a ride that will never get boring," he said. "It's such a dif-



Above, The Flying Turns uses a sophisticated Bosch video surveillance system to constantly monitor the operation. Right, this view of a Flying Turns vehicle in the station illustrates the complex wheel configuration. Below, the catch is a unique set of curving rails attached to the trough at the end of the ride that helps funnel the speeding trains to the center of the track and onto the skid brakes.

AT/SCOTT RUTHERFORD



ferent experience. I'll go walk in the queue line and talk with people I've never met, answering questions about the ride and such. Then I deliberately stand on the exit side of the platform and wait for them after they've ridden to get their feedback. I already know it's a great ride but to hear that from our guests, that they completely enjoyed it and found it to be unlike anything they'd ever done. That really makes all we went through over the last few years totally worth it. I am so pleased with what we've created here.

"I stand here and look at the Flying Turns. Then just to the right we have the Allen Herschell Looper and then the Flying Scooter, and I realize just how much amusement industry history Knoebels has. Yes, the Turns fits in just fine."

### It has been a long strange trip ...

With the 2013 season now wrapped up, Dick Knoebel fi-

nally had time to take a breath and reflect on what it means to have one of his career's most challenging and ultimately rewarding projects successfully completed. "It has pleased me to no end to have Flying Turns up and running. It would hurt me to hear people pass by and wonder why we hadn't given up and just demolished it," he said. "But I always had the faith that our talented team would accomplish what some said could not be done, like when they told me I couldn't move a wooden coaster. And our team did it! It brings joy to my heart hearing all the wonderful and superlative comments from the riders. Not for my personal satisfaction but to know what we have done pleases our guests."

The Knoebel family and its dedicated staff and all the contractors and artists should be commended for recreating this shining example of amusement industry history. Long may it fly!

## FAST FACTS

### Name/Park

Flying Turns  
Knoebels Amusement  
Resort, Elysburg, Pa.

### Ride Type

Wooden Bobsled  
roller coaster

### Height/Length/Speed

50 feet/1,300 feet/24 mph

### Ride Vehicles

Three 3-Car trains  
(each car seats one or two  
riders seated in-line)

### Design/Engineering

Knoebels staff  
Mike Boodley  
John Fetterman  
Bill Kelly  
Jim Martini

### Structure Builder

Knoebels staff  
Structural Technologies  
Great Coasters Intl.

### Train Manufacturer

Ashland Technologies  
Larson International

### Opened

Oct. 5, 2013



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# Grand Texas Theme Park: The Future of Fun in greater Houston

NEW CANEY, Texas — Not since the closing of Six Flags AstroWorld in 2005 has the Houston market had its very own major theme park..... until now. Grand Texas Theme Park & Entertainment District recently announced that it will be developing more than 600-acres of family fun just a few miles north of Houston.

The development is designed to be a true destination for families living and visiting in the Houston area. The District will include Grand Texas Theme Park, spanning 150-acres and themed to honor the rich & vibrant history of Texas.

Attractions inside the park will include three coasters, the tallest reaching 150 feet high with speeds in excess of 60 mph, a midway — complete with various amusement games & attractions, an adventure park that will host zip lines, ropes courses and other eco-friendly activities, a mile-long equestrian trail for horseback riding, "Agri-tainment" area that will include a petting zoo and working farm, a living museum showcasing trades & crafts from the time period, a Spanish-style market, charming German village, one full-size steam train and real stage coach, and an amphitheater and multiple staging areas where entertainers will enthrall guests with stories from



Artist's view of Grand Texas Theme Park's Main Street

Texas and the Wild West.

Grand Texas will also be designed with groups in mind, with a plethora of out-ing space, including air-conditioned areas for catered group events. Special events at the park will continue throughout the entire 10 months of the operating season, with an abundance of opportunities for families to celebrate the various holidays and changing seasons that will be enjoyed at Grand Texas.

Big Rivers Waterpark will also be located within the Entertainment District. This 30-acre waterpark is reminiscent of a mid-19th century bayou fishing village and themed after famous rivers in Texas. The waterslide towers will twist and turn between the

hardwoods and guests can take a refreshing float down the lazy river that will truly feel like a trip down the Guadalupe. A wave pool, children's play area for the little ones and other attractions will all be a part of the experience at Big Rivers. Beautiful spaces will be available for children's birthday parties and group events, as well.

Along with the theme park and waterpark, the Grand Texas Entertainment District will include a 200,000-square-foot multi-use Event Center and Concert Venue with over 70,000-square-feet of convention space, that will also host a minor league hockey arena. Across from the Event Center will be an Independent League baseball stadium with a capac-

ity of 9,000 guests. Downtown Texas will be developed near the entrance of the theme park and will provide more than 450,000-square-feet of shopping and secondary entertainment space by the completion of Phase II. Plans for the site also include an upscale RV Resort with 136 spaces, 200-acres of participation sports fields for tournament play that will host up to 200 teams per tournament, multiple hotels and an accumulation of casual dining.

Developer and CEO, Monty Galland, and investors have chosen Innovative Leisure Partners of Houston, as the Project Managers for the new development. Chuck Hendrix, CEO of ILP, is a veteran within the industry and will be directly involved in the planning, development and operational strategy of the Grand Texas Entertainment District. Development is scheduled to begin before year's end.

*Editor's note: Thanks to Ashley Higson, director of marketing for Grand Texas Theme Park and Entertainment District for allowing AT this sneak peek of the Grand Texas development. A press event to announce all the property details was scheduled just as this issue was being mailed to subscribers. AT will have future stories on Grand Texas as the development gets underway.*

## FAST FACTS

### Park/Location

Grand Texas  
Entertainment District/  
New Caney, Texas  
(near Hwy 242 and I-69)

### Property Size/Opening

610 total acres (150 acres for theme park)/theme park in 2015; remaining entertainment district in various phases

### Projected attendance

2.25 million visitors for 2015 opening

### Design/Build Team

CEO, Monty Galland  
Project Managers  
Innovative Leisure Partners (Chuck Hendrix)  
Houston  
Architecture Firms  
Bruce D. Robinson, Cincinnati, Ohio and Powers Brown  
Architecture, Houston  
Engineering  
Texas Land Planning, Houston

### Grand Texas Theme Park

- 150-acres
- 7 themed areas to honor history of Texas
  - 3 rollercoasters;
  - 2 water rides;
  - full-size steam train
- 4 entertainment stages
  - Adventure Park
  - Agri-tainment Area
  - Midway Games
  - Museum and more

### Big Rivers Waterpark

30-acres  
Themed after Texas Rivers

### Downtown Texas

Shopping and secondary entertainment area to be built in 2 phases

### Remaining Property Buildout (in phases)

- Multi-use Event Center
- Independent League Baseball Stadium
- 100-acres of participation sports fields
  - Wakeboard Lake
  - RV Resort
- 1 full service hotel;
- 2 limited service hotels
  - Stand-alone dining establishments

—Source: Grand Texas

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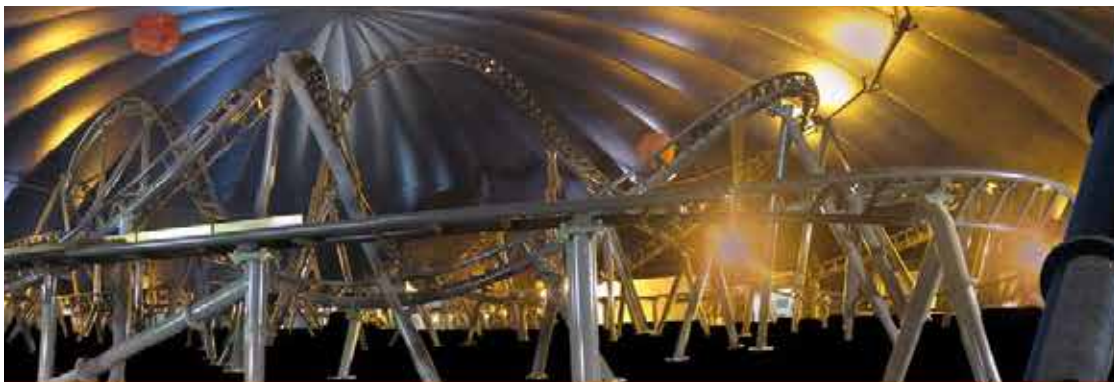
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# WATERPARKS & RESORTS

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## Polin delivers water attractions to Turkey resort

MUGLA PROVINCE, Turkey — The Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme Resort & Spa, Turkey, has chosen Polin as its partner in expanding its waterpark. The property first enlisted Polin's help with the original installation of its aquatic attractions two years ago. Since then, Polin's waterslides and waterplay attractions have been so popular among guests that Hilton management decided to add additional waterslides this year.

The Hilton Dalaman is an acclaimed facility, both among Hilton properties as well as among resorts on an international level. Last year, the Hilton Hotels & Resorts brand conducted a customer-satisfaction survey. The survey's respondents chose the Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme as tops in two categories: "Europe's Best Food and Beverage Hotel" and "Europe's Excellence in Service." In addition, the facility was chosen as one of the 100 best hotels in the world by Russian guests in 2011.

The property also has received awards as Turkey's "Leading Beach Resort" by the World Travel Awards in 2010 and 2011, as Europe's "Leading Wedding Honeymoon and Wedding Resort" in 2011 and as recipient of TripAdvisor's "Certificate of Excellence" in



This slide tower from Polin at the Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme Resort & Spa in Mugla Province, Turkey features five different slide options for resort guests to enjoy. COURTESY POLIN

2010 and 2011.

The expansion includes six new attractions from Polin:

- Black Hole with natural light effects. This enclosed tube slide is Polin's most popular ride. Guests experience unique, dramatic special effects as they travel at high speeds through the slides' twists and turns.

- Wave Slide. This high-speed ride delivers a breathtaking experience.

- Rabbit Slide. A kid-friendly slide — this cute attraction is often a child's first ride experience.

- Clown Shower. Water sprays from this friendly fellow's nose and boxing gloves for a fun family experience.

- Giraffe Shower. A new water feature from Polin, this creative attraction will appeal to both the very young and the young-at-heart.

- Mushroom Shower. This

appealing feature is the centerpiece of many facilities' children's areas with its variety of options in both sizes and color choices.

One of the features of Polin's slides that make them particularly appealing for high-end resorts such as the Hilton Dalaman Sarigerme is the sophisticated look of its products. Polin's waterslides are all manufactured using RTM, also known as resin-

transfer molding. This technique allows the products to be physically and aesthetically pleasing. The shiny, smooth exterior and many other advantages of this latest technology gives the slides a quality that appeals to the type of guests who stay at these types of high-end resorts. They expect the best, and both the Hilton and Polin strive to deliver on all levels.

—Jeffrey Seifert



Left, This waterplay pool features several animal themed slides and umbrella-like water features for the younger set to enjoy. Right, Polin's popular Black Hole, shown as far left slide, features natural light effects. COURTESY POLIN



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## WhiteWater supplies two major waterslide complexes to Wet'n'Wild Sydney

SYDNEY, Australia — Set to become one of the world's top waterparks upon opening in December 2013, Village Roadshow's Wet'n'Wild Sydney will boast two unique major waterslide complexes, both designed and built by WhiteWater of Richmond, Canada.

Featured at the waterpark will be a world's first: a 12-bodyslide complex featuring an eight-lane combo Whizzard Twist mat racer intertwined with four dueling AquaLoops, the near vertical looping waterslide.

The second complex will offer riders thrills, chills and multiple ride experiences in an exciting eight inner-tube complex that features four MasterBlasters, a Giant AquaTube, Constrictor, Boomerango and Rattler.

"Village Roadshow's long-term history in working with WhiteWater has resulted in numerous world's firsts for our waterparks", said Wet'n'Wild Sydney's general manager, Chris Warhurst. "Their iconic waterslides continually draw rave reviews and enhance the overall guest experience. These two complexes will be a highlight of the park."

All new WhiteWater waterslides now feature WhiteWater's newest technological innovation, SilkGel, offering superior gloss and colour retention. As the standard for every new WhiteWater waterslide, SilkGel offers the industry's only 10-year warranty against fading and chalking on new installations.



Above, this 12-lane bodyslide complex will be a world's first. It contains an eight-lane combo Whizzard Twist mat racer and four dueling AquaLoops. Below, this eight-slide tower includes MasterBlasters, a Giant Aquatube, Constrictor, Boomerango and Rattler.  
COURTESY WHITEWATER





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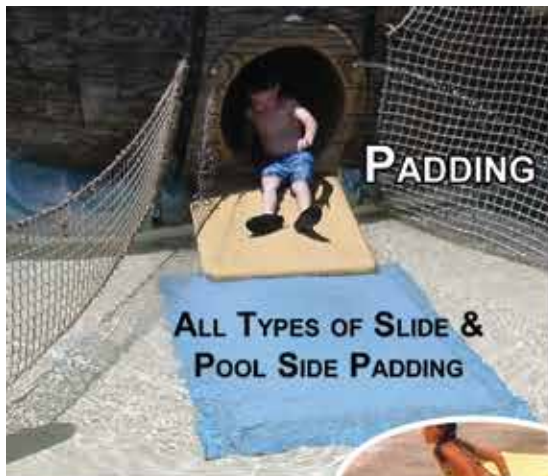
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# Quassy Amusement Park grows waterpark with new name and expansion

*ProSlide, Vortex deliver water fun for Splash Away Bay*

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — If you ask Ron Gustafson, director of public relations and marketing for Quassy Amusement Park, he will openly credit the addition of waterpark attractions keeping the park afloat. The family-owned park took on new life with the addition of Saturation Station a decade ago in 2003. An SCS multi-level, waterplay structure with simple ProSlide children slides and numerous activities was a clear hit for the park. In 2006, due to the popularity of the waterpark attractions, Quassy added two long Tunnel Twister waterslides from ProSlide, and the results were the same — instantly popular.

"Before this season it was becoming evident, because of the popularity of water attractions, that the expansion plans were essential to better serve our customers," says Gustafson.

"We have been working with Phil Hayles from ProSlide for years," says Eric Anderson, co-owner and Quassy park president. "[They're] a great company — always on time

and very responsive when challenges arise."

For 2013 the park has added even more attractions and decided to rename the park with this big expansion. Keeping the name Saturation Station for the play structure, the waterpark as a whole is now called Splash Away Bay. New attractions include a Bullet Bowl from ProSlide (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada), two ProSlide Freefall slides, and a Vortex children's sprayground.

"Splash Away Bay was a title that surfaced with the management team," says Anderson. "At first we thought we would tag one of the new waterpark attractions with that name, but the more we thought about it, the better Splash Away Bay sounded as an overall waterpark title."

Co-owner George Frantzis II explains, "Initially we were going to call the children's play area 'Splash Away Bay,' but decided the same name was a great fit for the entire waterpark since it is adjacent to our beach."

The new sprayground, provided by Vortex Aquatic Structures International, Inc. (Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Canada) is called Fish Pond. Park management says this addition was in response to guest feedback requesting a waterplay area just for toddlers. The



**Quassy virtually doubled the size of its waterpark, formerly known as Saturation Station, with the new additions from ProSlide Technology and Vortex Aquatic Structures. Park officials coined the name Splash Away Bay for the re-named waterpark as preparations were made for the 2013 season. COURTESY QUASSY / RON GUSTAFSON**

cute activities include a rainbow spray tunnel, geysers and themed hands-on water play elements. The sprayground stretches to 2,000-square feet. M. E. O'Brien & Sons Inc. of Medfield, Mass., is the regional distributor of the Vortex products.

"We envisioned Fish Pond being an extremely popular play area for youngsters — especially toddlers," Frantzis says. "It is very parent-friendly so adults can keep an eye on their children. It's not an attraction for older kids, but

geared toward those under eight years old."

"The new splash pad for younger children also filled a void that existed in the [waterpark] and has been a home-run," adds Gustafson.

This new expansion stands on the area that was vacated after the park removed their Monster Mouse coaster at the close of the 2010 season.

"I really like how the position of the waterpark faces the entrance where people come into the park, and the anticipation of the kids as they walk

in is awesome," smiles Anderson. "The reaction they have is really enjoyable to watch."

The Bullet Bowl lets thrill-seekers travel the 210-foot tunnel from a height of 30 feet in pairs or as single riders with the appropriate tubes for both situations. Once entering the bowl, riders swirl until lost momentum sends them out the "drain" in the center of the bowl, sliding into a splash trough.

The two Freefall slides share the same platform and drop riders from 30 feet at a speed of 20 feet per second. Each slide is 140 feet in length. Rider capacity per hour can be up to 300 riders for both the pair of body flumes and the Bullet Bowl. A height requirement for both is 48 inches.

The waterpark is included with an all-day admission to Quassy Amusement Park. In addition, guests can choose just to buy a waterpark admission if they don't plan to enjoy the amusement rides on that particular visit.

Splash Away Bay is part of the park's multi-year improvement plan initiated in 2009. Since then the park has added the Free Fall 'N' drop tower in 2010 and a Zamperla Crazy Cups ride in 2012. Sandwiched between those two additions was the long-awaited Wooden Warrior roller coaster that opened to rave reviews from coaster fans back in 2011. Overall, the investment goal is projected at \$5 million in improvements over the multi-year plan.



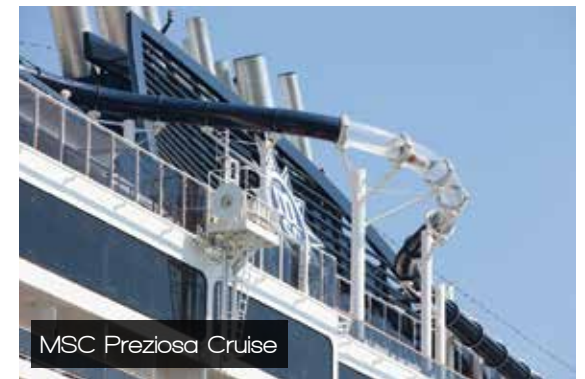
**New BulletBowl ride at Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury, Conn., is a major hit with guests. Three new waterslides and a children's splash pad area were added at the waterpark. The three gigantic slides were provided by ProSlide Technology of Canada.**

COURTESY QUASSY / RON GUSTAFSON



**The Fish Pond at Quassy Amusement Park's expanded Splash Away Bay waterpark is a huge hit with the younger generation. The new children's play area has more than a dozen interactive H2O elements in it from Vortex Aquatic Structures of Canada. COURTESY QUASSY / RON GUSTAFSON**









## NEWSPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert, jseifert@amusementtoday.com

When the proposed **Hawaiian Falls** waterpark in Pflugerville, Texas, was announced, many in the community questioned whether developing a waterpark during a drought period was a wise decision. Hawaiian Falls founder **David Busch** did his best to allay the concerns. The park will use about 10 million gallons of water — about what it would take to water two soccer fields over the summer, which is significantly less than what it would take to provide water to homes or apartments on a same size plot of land. To put that in another perspective, the City of Pflugerville typically uses nine to 10 million gallons of water every day, so the waterpark is consuming one day's worth of water. Busch said, "Ninety-five percent of the water is recycled and the filtration systems are so sophisticated and green-conscious that we really retain and clean most of the water."

•  
**Great Wolf Lodge Resorts'** 12th lodge is expected to open late spring in Massachusetts. **Great Wolf Lodge New England** will feature more than 100,000 square feet of entertainment offerings including more than 68,000 square feet of indoor waterpark. Signature attractions include a six-story funnel slide, **ProSlide Tornado**, wave pool and multi-level interactive tree house. The resort will debut two new styles of suites: Majestic KidCabin and Grizzly Wolf Den. KidCabin will sleep 11 people with a king bedroom, two queen beds and a themed cabin for kids with a daybed and set of bunk beds. Grizzly Wolf Den will sleep 10 people with two separate bedrooms, living room and themed kids wolf den, complete with bunk beds. In addition to several dining options and food outlets, the resort will include Great Wolf's first and only 16,000 square foot indoor play area with a multi-level ropes course, miniature golf, kids' spa, mini bowling alley and 12,000 square feet of conference space with breakout rooms and built-in audio/video technology. Unlike the other Great Wolf lodges, this property is not a new build, but rather a renovation and expansion of an existing **Holiday Inn** and **CoCo Key** waterpark. The lodge-to-be is located in the City of Fitchburg, located off Route 2, about 45 minutes from Boston.

•  
A second-year slump in attendance at the **Hawaiian Falls** waterpark in Waco, Texas, isn't going to stop planned expansion. Officials with the park say unfavorable weather combined with the an expected second-year drop due to the waning novelty of a brand-new park contributed to a 17 percent drop in attendance compared to its opening year.

Hawaiian Falls has proposed a \$5 million year-round 31-acre adventure park to include ziplines, ropes courses, nature trails and a resort campground on the banks of the Bosque River. The 31-acre wooded plot of land between the existing waterpark and the Bosque River is owned by the city of Waco. If the council approves the project by early 2014, construction could begin in spring and wrap up by fall, and it would open by spring break 2015.

So far, the **City of Waco** officials have been pleased with their partnership with Hawaiian Falls. Some have complained that the city's investment meant the loss of public swimming pools, and that there are no options for free or low cost swimming. The city closed its last public pool two years ago after attendance had dwindled to almost nothing.

However, the 314 children who attend the City of Waco's summer camps got to take weekly trips to the waterpark at no extra cost. Hawaiian Falls also has an outreach program for lower-income families. Those who can't afford the full admission price can ask for assistance. "We don't want to turn anyone away," said **Evan Barnett**, regional vice president for Hawaiian Falls said. "We do work with people individually."

•  
**Hawaiian Falls** wasn't the only park to suffer a sophomore slump. **Aquaventure Waterpark** in Norfolk, Nebraska, had a significant drop in attendance for its second season dropping from 63,000 the first year to 43,000 the following year. **Sheila Schukei**, Norfolk's human resources manager, said a cooler June and July added to the park's drop along with an expected second-year decline.

"We had 63,000 which is way above what we ever anticipated, and knew that probably wasn't going to be the constant for us. But it was a great start, and this year we had 43,000 but given the weather, we felt pretty good about that," said Schukei.

Last year the waterpark made nearly \$19,000 but Schukei estimated the park will cost the city more than \$45,000 this year.

•  
The **Carbondale Park District** and **Carbondale Chamber of Commerce** in Carbondale, Illinois, held a groundbreaking ceremony on September 27, for a new **Super Splash Park**. The new outdoor recreation complex has been in the making for more than 10 years. The waterpark will feature lap and leisure pools to provide for competitive swimming and learn to swim programs. A water playground, lazy river and waterslides will provide family entertainment. The park district's goal is to create a destination spot for its local residents as well as draw visitors from the surrounding areas. The park is expected to open June 2014.

•  
New Braunfels-based **Schlitterbahn** is helping to turn tragedy into triumph by salvaging wood from trees scorched by a massive fire that burned tens of thousands of acres near Bastrop, Texas. Schlitterbahn decided it could salvage some of those trees, turning the burned timber into lumber that is being used to construct part of the \$41 million waterpark in Corpus Christi, Texas. Most of the wood was simply going to be ground into mulch by the **City of Bastrop**. Over the years, Schlitterbahn has made an extended effort to repurpose materials that might have otherwise been discarded and has used those materials for its various waterparks and resorts.

•  
The \$230 million **Kalahari** resort held a groundbreaking ceremony on October 1 in Tobyhanna Township, Pennsylvania. The first phase of the project, including 457 guest rooms, a 100,000-square-foot indoor waterpark, seasonal outdoor waterpark and 65,000 square-foot convention center, is expected to open by summer of 2015.

Kalahari owner **Todd Nelson** was on hand along with local and state officials, including **Governor Tom Corbett**. The project is the third Kalahari resort and the first on the East Coast. The Poconos location puts Kalahari in range of major population centers, Nelson said, and combines a family-friendly atmosphere with the large meeting space.

The resort is estimated to add at least 1,000

local jobs, in addition to potential staffing increases at surrounding businesses benefitted by tourism revenue. But Nelson was quick to add that his resort is not providing minimum wage jobs. Nelson said pay for workers will range from \$10 per hour up to \$250,000 per year, with 80 management jobs. He also said his business prefers full-time workers and will not adjust hours down because of the Affordable Health Care Act.

The second phase is planned to eventually add 400 more guest rooms, 100,000 more square feet to the indoor waterpark and two to three acres more space to the outdoor park.

•  
On September 23, CEO **Andy Mulvilhill** of **Mountain Creek Waterpark**, Vernon, New Jersey, unveiled plans for a new indoor waterpark, action sports center and hotel. Mountain Creek plans to build a 400-room hotel along with a 100,000 square-foot indoor waterpark and 40,000 square-foot indoor action sports center. The combination indoor action sports center and waterpark, estimated to cost between \$120 to \$140 million, will be the first of its kind in the country. Mulvilhill said the indoor facilities would eliminate the seasonality of the resort and bring in year-round cash flow providing an estimated \$1.6 million in new annual revenues for the township. Mountain Creek opened in 1998 on the site of the closed **Action Park**, a waterpark infamous for its unique, thrilling and sometimes dangerous attractions. Action Park closed in 1996 and the property, including the **Great Gorge Ski Resort**, was sold. The new owners opened the park as Mountain Creek in 1998 with a new emphasis on safety. The resort was sold again in 2010 to a group led by **Eugene Mulvilhill**, the original operator of Action Park and the Great Gorge Ski Resort.

•  
The **Blue Heron Bay Splashpad** in Whitmore Lake, Michigan, was awarded the National Association of County Parks and Recreation Officials (NACPRO) Park and Recreation Award (Class I) for its **Vortex Aquatic Structures International** Splashpad complex.

Blue Heron Bay, a new-for-2013 project of the **Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission**, is the largest Vortex Aquatic Splashpad in North America with over 20,000 square feet. The \$4 million dollar complex was two years in the planning and replaced the 12-year-old splash park that was past its lifespan. The award was presented to honor and focus national attention on the commission's spray park installation as the best in design, planning, construction and benefit to the community.

The 414-acre park also includes UV water treatment that kills over 99 percent of all harmful bacteria, viruses and algae — including *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia* — without side effects or dangerous by-products. The process results in pure and clear water and reduces the need for chlorination by almost 60 percent. The Blue Heron Bay Splashpad is divided into three areas, and includes a toddler zone with bubble fountains and other gentle water flow apparatuses. On the opposite end of the park is an interactive zone for older children that includes a 24-foot tower complex with two slides. Both slides feature shallow runouts instead of splash pools and nowhere in the complex is the water over a few inches deep allowing non-swimmers to enjoy every attraction.





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# ProSlide finds success with two-person Pipeline Wave

**STORY:** Jeffrey L. Seifert  
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

OTTAWA, Ontario — Bucking the trend of bigger is better, ProSlide has found success with a smaller version of the company’s popular Tornado Wave slide with four installations in its introductory year.

The Pipeline Wave offers the same zero gravity experience as its larger brethren, but utilizes a two-person raft instead of the typical four, and requires a much smaller footprint. Not only will the new attraction fit into a smaller space, but by utilizing less fiberglass and steel, it offers a cost-saving alternative to larger attractions.

The curved-wall Tornado Wave and the new Pipeline Wave are both based on the incredibly popular ProSlide Tornado rides — introduced 10 years ago, with more than 60 installations worldwide.

Ironically two of the customers for this year’s Pipeline Wave already feature a ProSlide Tornado, with Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari having what is generally considered the first to open to the public. Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Arlington, Texas, was also an early Tornado customer with an installation the following year in 2004. The two remaining class of 2013 Pipeline Waves can be found at White Water Bay in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Grand Sight in Lingshui, China

“Our new Hyena Falls



Hyena Falls | Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari  
Santa Claus, Ind.



Tsunami Surge | Six Flags Hurricane Harbor  
Arlington, Texas



Pipeline Wave | White Water Bay  
Oklahoma City, Okla.



Pipeline Wave | Grand Sight Waterpark,  
Lingshui, China

water slide complex brought us the increased capacity we needed for this season,” says Holiday World & Splashin’

Safari president Matt Eckert. “ProSlide has another winner on their hands with the Pipeline Wave feature. Of our four

new water slides, the ‘wave’ ride was the one everyone wanted to try — and try again.” ProSlide has yet another

successful attraction and is sure to be installing plenty of Pipeline Wave attractions in the near future.

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# Branson's White Water makes slide, sign donation to museum

BRANSON, Mo. — White Water waterpark in Branson, Missouri, has removed its 25-year-old Bermuda Triangle fiberglass waterslide to make way for a new attraction. Herschend Family Entertainment is not yet ready to release the details of the new attraction. "We promise there will be more exciting construction



This *Amusement Today* archive photo of White Water's Bermuda Triangle body slide shows its downhill enclosed zig-zag course.

AT FILE



along the way," said Lisa Rau, director publicity/public relations at Silver Dollar City and White Water. "We will confirm it will be the biggest thrill ever for White Water. With the momentum of Outlaw Run, we had to come back with another thrill."

Silver Dollar City and White Water Director of Operations Cory Roebuck said the new attraction will cost \$2 million and have a footprint comparable to the Bermuda Triangle.

The Bermuda Triangle was such a historic and notable slide that it will be included in the archives at the National Roller Coaster Museum (NRCMA).

"We're actually going to

take a piece of this slide, as well as some of the signage from the slide, and we're going to ship that off to their archive facility in Plainview, Texas to be a part of their ongoing museum effort," Roebuck said. "Due to the initial fact that we built our own slide here and one of the first fiberglass slides in the United States, we're going to be included in that, which is an honor."

NRCMA Chairman Gary Slade said, "We are thrilled with this slide and sign donation from White Water as it has major historical importance to the early beginning of the waterpark industry. It was cutting edge for its time and remained a thrilling slide all the way to the end. It's a testament to the early day designers (1988) and maintenance staff that have kept the slide thrilling guests for so long. We can't thank Brad Thomas and Herschend Family Entertainment enough for this treasure!"



White Water waterpark in Branson, Mo. has removed its 1988-built Bermuda Triangle waterslide to make room for a new attraction. A six-foot section of the historic fiberglass trough and the ride's entry sign have both been secured by the park and donated to the National Roller Coaster Museum for safekeeping in their ever-growing archives.

COURTESY WHITEWATER

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# BUSINESS

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## New Ocean Park hotel major part of master redevelopment plan

HONG KONG — Ocean Park has announced news of further expansion with the development of a new hotel targeted for completion in the third quarter of 2016. With the completion of its Master Redevelopment Plan and the opening of a number of new attractions for 2014, Ocean Park officials feel that one day will not be enough to experience all that the park will have to offer.

The 495-room Ocean Hotel will be built in front of Ocean Park's main entrance and will provide convenient accommodations for guests spending multiple days at Ocean Park. The hotel project is expected to create 3,500 new jobs during the construction phase and, upon completion, approximately 500 permanent hospitality positions.

Dr. Allan Zeman, Chairman of Ocean Park, said, "Having been recognized as a world-leading theme park with our recent Applause Award accolade, we are now ready to transform Ocean Park

into a premier international resort destination and further fulfil our role as a major pillar of Hong Kong's tourism industry. With the completion of the MTR South Island Line in 2015, the new hotel will also enhance Southern District's position as a new base for travellers. The proposed design of the hotel must be compatible with Ocean Park's mission to provide guests with memorable experiences combining conservation, education and entertainment values, as well as its vision to connect people with nature. We are grateful to the Hong Kong Government for working closely with us to come up with an appealing project, which will enhance destination tourism, and reinforce our contribution to local employment opportunities in both the construction and hospitality sectors.

"Further to the completion of our Master Redevelopment Plan, which expanded the park significantly, Ocean Park will be unveiling a number of world-class attractions



In addition to the attractions already announced for 2014, Ocean Park has confirmed that it will build the 495-room Ocean Hotel in front of the Hong Kong park's main entrance. Slated to open in 2016, the new hotel will provide convenient accommodations for guests spending multiple days at Ocean Park as well as 500 permanent hospitality positions.

COURTESY OCEAN PARK

beginning in 2014. A new shark aquarium, created from the former Atoll Reef, will open in the third quarter of 2014. This will be followed by the opening of the much-an-

anticipated koala exhibit in the fourth quarter of 2014. More exciting still is the on-going planning work for the redevelopment of the now-closed Tai Shue Wan area into a wa-

ter park," concluded Zeman. "We look forward to sharing each exciting milestone with the people of Hong Kong and visitors from all over the world alike."

## SeaWorld to debut Sea of Surprises float in Rose Parade



SAN DIEGO, Calif. — Sea of Surprises will be the theme of the SeaWorld float in the 125th Rose Parade presented by Honda on Jan. 1, 2014 in Pasadena, Calif. The marine park's most popular animals will be depicted on the float, designed to highlight the fun, inspiration and surprises that guests will find at the park during SeaWorld's 50th Celebration kicking off next year.

For nearly five decades, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment has surprised and amazed guests with up-close encounters with animals, unique entertainment and thrilling rides. On New Year's Day, the beauty and majesty of the sea will come to life in Pasadena, as SeaWorld's Sea of Surprises float appears in the Rose Parade.

"We're delighted to be part of the 125th Rose Parade with our Sea of Surprises float," said Jim Atchison, president and CEO of SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment. "SeaWorld has been creating entertainment experiences that blend imagination with nature for almost 50 years, and this float will help bring that celebration to life."

Built by Fiesta Parade Floats and designed by Stanley A. Meyer Design LLC, the SeaWorld float features a little boy, wide-eyed with wonder, who dives beneath a cresting wave. Through his ocean exploration, the boy's fantasy comes to life, in perfect fitting with the Rose Parade's theme this year, "Dreams Come True."

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## FAST TRACK

COMPILED: Scott Rutherford,  
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**Six Flags Entertainment Corporation** announced record revenue for the third quarter of 2013 of \$505 million, representing a \$19 million or four percent increase over the same period in 2012. Adjusted EBITDA of \$268 million for the same period represented an \$11 million or four percent improvement over prior year and included a \$3 million accrual for estimated litigation costs relating to the July 19 accident at **Six Flags Over Texas**. Third quarter attendance, revenue and profit were somewhat suppressed due to lower attendance at Six Flags Over Texas following the accident.

**Donley Auction Services** will be selling the 88-year-old carousel from now-closed **Kiddieland**, Melrose Park, Ill., to the highest bidder as part of a 300-item auction Nov. 16 at **Donley's Wild West Town** in Union, Ill. The carousel was built in 1925 for Kiddieland by the **Philadelphia Toboggan Company**. The 50-foot carousel will not be moved to the auction site for presentation but its 48 signature hand-carved horses—all of which have the company's logo carefully carved into the animal structure—will be on full display at the event.

**One Systems**, a manufacturer of direct-weather, high output loudspeaker systems, has announced the appointment of **Contact Distribution** as its Canadian distributor. Contact Distribution Ltd, located in Scarborough, Ontario, is one of the leading distributors of

professional audio and video equipment in Canada.

The **Adventure Aquarium** in Camden, N.J. recently welcomed a pair of six-foot female **Orinoco Crocodiles**. Named after the Orinoco River in their native South America, the aquarium says Orinocos are a critically endangered species known for their long, sharp snouts and captivating pale green eyes. The species is so close to extinction, the **International Union for Conservation of Nature** (IUCN) has estimated their wild population at only 250 to 1,500.

The **Walt Disney Company China**, has officially announced plans to build the company's first, and the world's largest, **Disney Store** in Lujiazui in Shanghai.

Ground is soon to break on a \$104 million mega indoor theme park in Oman, following the signing of an agreement between the **FBF Group of Companies** (FBF) and **Arab Malaysia Development Company** (AMDC) to develop the **Majarat Oman Resort**. The **Al Sawadi Beach Resort**, halfway between the Omani cities of Muscat and Sohar, will host the attraction, which is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2016. Majarat Oman aims to cater to the whole family with a diverse range of activities and will have four zones.

The **Garden Bridge** at **Universal Studios** in Orlando is the first of its kind in Florida. Designed by **Miles Architecture Group Inc.**, **Libra Design Group** and **Green Roof Service LLC**, the green bridge creates an innovative connection of Universal City developments. Selected ground covers, shrubs and trees escort pedestrians almost without notice that they are crossing over a busy highway. The distinctive landmark project is

engineered with people in mind.

**Parks and Resorts Scandinavia** has recorded a 10-year high in visitor numbers with 2.7 million guests from January to September 2013 (a six percent increase on the 2012 season). Outgoing CEO **Jan Roy** attributed the successful season to a strategy of investing in world class guest experiences and high quality staff.

**SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund** has donated \$1.2 million to fund 93 wildlife research, habitat protection, animal rescue and conservation education projects around the world. Over the last 10 years, the fund has given more than \$10 million in grants to protect wildlife and wild places.

**Tivoli Gardens** in Copenhagen celebrated its 170th anniversary this past summer. The park has provided entertainment to millions of visitors since its inception in 1843 at which time a merry-go-round and a roller coaster were the only two rides. In 2013, there are now 27 rides, including the new Aquila, a **Zamperla Air Race**, and the park continues to change and develop as the years go by. As its founder Georg Carstensen said, "Tivoli will never be finished."

**Jungle Cruise** at both **Disneyland** park and **Magic Kingdom** park have been temporarily transformed into **Jingle Cruise** for the holiday season! In this new seasonal storyline of the attraction, the Skippers have grown homesick for the holidays, so they've added holiday cheer to the Jungle Cruise queue and boathouse with decorations that have been mailed to them from home (plus a few they've created themselves). The Skippers have also added a slew of new jokes to their tours that are the perfect way to get guests in the holiday spirit.

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## Vera Bryan, Drayton Manor Theme Park co-founder, dies at 96

STAFFORDSHIRE, U.K. — Drayton Manor Theme Park recently announced that the park's co-founder, Vera Bryan, died peacefully on October 16 at Good Hope Hospital in Sutton Coldfield.

Vera Bryan, 96, dedicated her life to Drayton Manor and her family. Her passion helped bring joy and laughter to millions of families from the U.K. and abroad.



**Bryan**

After leaving school at the age of 14, Bryan began working at California-in-England pleasure park in Berkshire, which was owned by her father, and by 1935, Vera had taken over the running of the tea shop with all the responsibilities that role involved.

However, following the outbreak of the Second World War, California-in-England was closed and the restaurant was converted into a factory manufacturing aircraft parts. Bryan understood her duty and swapped her apron for



**George and Vera Bryan, founders of the U.K.'s Drayton Manor Theme Park, are seen in this file photo of the couple in the park. Vera died on October 16 at the age of 96. She was preceded in death by her husband, George, who died on Sept. 20, 2013 at the age of 92.**

COURTESY DRAYTON MANOR THEME PARK

overalls and spent five years working at the factory, much of the time as a welder.

It was in May 1942 that Vera met her husband, George H. H. Bryan and they married later that year.

California-in-England reopened after the end of the war, but by the late 1940s and inspired by her father's busi-

ness, the Bryan's were ready to embark on their own legacy — Drayton Manor Theme Park.

The couple first arrived at the 80-acre site near Tamworth 64 years ago, on October 16, 1949, and the land was covered with four foot-high brambles, mounds of rubbish and old army huts. Undaunted by the challenge, the couple, along

with a small, dedicated team of engineers and mechanics, spent six months transforming the site.

In April 1950, Drayton Manor Park opened and for decades, Vera and her husband worked side-by-side transforming the small attraction into a major national tourism destination. From organizing the catering and supervising staff, to making curtains and other furnishings for the tea rooms and restaurant, Vera was an inspiration to all.

In addition to the running of Drayton Manor Theme Park, being a mother to Colin, Jane and Andrew, grandmother and great grandmother, Vera was also a passionate supporter of various charities, including the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). In 2004, she named the new Drayton Manor lifeboat, which was purchased following fundraising activities by the park.

Vera Bryan's passing comes less than a month after her husband's, who died peacefully on September 20.

## PGAV Destinations is architect for new Polar Bear Habitat

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — PGAV Destinations has been announced as the architects and exhibit designers for the Saint Louis Zoo's new \$15 million McDonnell Polar Bear Point.

Construction began September 3, 2013 at the Zoo while Penguin & Puffin Coast, also designed by PGAV Destinations, will be temporarily closed until 2015 when the new polar bear habitat will be completed.

"It's thrilling to be working with the Saint Louis Zoo on what will yet again be an excellent project," said PGAV Destinations VP John Kemper. "The Zoo will premiere a state-of-the-art habitat that enhances a beloved historic exhibit, featuring dynamic experiences like witnessing a polar bear swim underwater!"

The new attraction will cover more than 7,000 square feet and feature up to five polar bears including a walk-through cave that will provide exciting up-close opportunities for guests to view polar bears above and below water.




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# MARKETWATCH

## RIDING THE MARKET



\*Six Flags stock split on June 27, 2013

Company	Prices One Month Ago	Prices 10/24/13	52 Weeks High	Low
Cedar Fair L.P.	\$43.94	\$44.88	\$45.09	\$30.90
MGM Mirage	\$20.14	\$20.64	\$20.98	\$9.15
Six Flags Ent. Corp.*	\$34.53	\$37.40	\$40.31	\$27.09
CBS Corp.	\$56.07	\$59.60	\$59.98	\$31.84
Walt Disney Co.	\$64.32	\$69.05	\$69.20	\$46.53
Apollo Global Mgt. LLC	\$27.73	\$34.37	\$34.88	\$13.83
Blackstone Group	\$24.69	\$26.96	\$28.73	\$13.31
Village Roadshow	\$6.50	\$6.62	\$6.75	\$3.50
NBC Universal	\$24.32	\$25.94	\$26.35	\$19.87
SeaWorld Entertainment Inc.	\$31.65	\$29.76	\$39.65	\$27.48

## CURRENCY DIESEL PRICES



Region (U.S.)	As of 10/21/13	Change from year ago
East Coast	\$3.905	-\$0.203
Midwest	\$3.853	-\$0.248
Gulf Coast	\$3.800	-\$0.199
Mountain	\$3.875	-\$0.368
West Coast	\$3.954	-\$0.241
California	\$4.129	-\$0.256

## TOP 7 MOST TRADED CURRENCIES



On 10/24/13 \$1 USD =
0.7259 EURO
0.6176 GBP (British Pound)
97.54 JPY (Japanese Yen)
0.8939 CHF (Swiss Franc)
1.0353 AUD (Australian Dollar)
1.0328 CAD (Canadian Dollar)

## PEOPLE WATCH

### Vekoma announces new North American VP

Netherlands-based Vekoma Rides Mfg. has announced the addition of **Nathan Jones** as its new vice president of sales for the United States and Canada.

Effective on September 1, Nathan now handles the U.S. and Canadian amusement and theme park sales for Vekoma Rides Manufacturing and the giant wheel division, Dutch Wheels, both members of the Vekoma Rides group of companies.

Jones comes to Vekoma with more than 15 years experience in the industry working in various managerial and executive positions at Prime Play (Whitewater West) and has extensive experience and background in sales, marketing and management. He will operate out of his office in Vancouver, Canada, and will work closely with the Vekoma sales and product development teams at the corporate offices.

He may be reached at [Nathan.Jones@vekoma.com](mailto:Nathan.Jones@vekoma.com)



Jones

Hutcheson joins IAAPA as manager of family entertainment center (FEC) programs. In this role, she serves as the primary contact for IAAPA's FEC members and develops programs, products, and services for the FEC segment of IAAPA's membership. More specifically, Hutcheson's responsibilities include serving as the staff liaison to the FEC Committee, coordinating the content for the FEC online community, producing the FunExtra newsletter, engaging in FEC-focused social media, coordinating education programs for FEC operators, serving as the direct contact for FEC members and prospective members, and more.

Hutcheson joins IAAPA with extensive marketing and communications experience in the family entertainment center/attractions industry. Her career spans 24 years and includes work at Sportsworld, Funfuzion at New Roc City, and Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament.

"Leslie is a great addition to the IAAPA team," said Paul Noland IAAPA president and CEO. "Her vast experience and industry knowledge will serve IAAPA's FEC members and the association well."

### IAAPA adds Brian Kirkland and Nico Reynders

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) welcomes two new staff members to its headquarters and European office team. **Brian Kirkland** is IAAPA's director of education programs and services and **Nico Reynders** joins the IAAPA Europe team as junior program manager.

Kirkland is responsible for the development and evaluation of IAAPA's educational offerings and assists with the management of IAAPA's awards program. Prior to IAAPA, Kirkland was assistant director of education at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) and senior manager of learning with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE).

Reynders recruits new members in Europe, provides customer service for IAAPA members in the region, and handles all online marketing for the office.

Before joining IAAPA, Reynders spent six years as the assistant front office manager at Hotel Mercure Leuven Center, an Accor Hotels property in Belgium. His previous experience also includes a brief stint with Bobbejaanland, where he worked in merchandising.

### BPAA executive director Johnson step down

The Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA) announced that **Steve Johnson** resigned as executive director, effective immediately. The announcement was made during a board of directors meeting at the International Bowling Campus in Arlington, Texas.

"After my years of service and undergoing the challenge of leading and implementing a number of initiatives for the association, it is time for new leadership," Johnson said. "I'm proud of the progress and accomplishments we've made at the BPAA and this is an appropriate time for me to pursue another opportunity outside of bowling and for BPAA to select an individual to build on what we have all accomplished."

BPAA President Cathy DeSocio said BPAA will begin a national search for a successor.

### Hutcheson joins IAAPA as FEC Programs Manager

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) has announced the addition of **Leslie Hutcheson** to its Alexandria, Virginia team.

## New group chief executive set for Swedish parks

SCANDINAVIA — **Christer Fogelmarck**, 41 years old, has been appointed new group chief executive for Parks and Resorts Scandinavia, the group that owns the Swedish amusement parks Gröna Lund, Kolmården, Aquaria, Furuvik and Skara Sommarland. Fogelmarck is currently the group's marketing director, and assumes his new position on January 1, 2014. He succeeds **Jan Roy**, 65 years, who is retiring.

"Christer has already played an integral part in shaping our future strategy and investment plans going forward. His broad industry experience and strong leadership skills makes him the obvious choice to take the organization forward and realize our plans," says **Johan Tidstrand**, principal owner of Parks and Resorts Scandinavia.

Fogelmarck has a strong management background particularly in the event and sponsorship arena as CEO for the event and sponsorship agency Eventum and film distributor Atlantic Film. Over the years, he has also worked with business development for Melodifestivalen, Stockholm Open, Live Nation, Blixten & Co and Stockholmssmässan, and others.

"I'm thrilled and honored to have been given this challenge. I'm repeatedly struck by the dedication and competence within the team and throughout our parks. This, in combination with the drive and commitment of the owners, creates superb conditions for the future," says Fogelmarck.

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# Gateway Ticketing Systems celebrates 25 years, breaks ground on new building

BOYERTOWN, Pa. — Gateway Ticketing Systems, Inc. celebrated 25 years in serving its customers with a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a new 42,000 square foot, two-story office building to serve as the global headquarters for the company. Completion for the \$7 million project by Hollenbach Construction Inc. and Mulhlenberg Greene Architects, Ltd. is expected in spring 2014 and is being financed by M&T Bank in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA).

Gateway Ticketing Systems, Inc. was born 25 years ago in a small shed behind co-founder Peter Grumblatt's house. The small space soon became too tight to house Grumblatt and co-founders Michael Andre and Darryl Moser and the company moved to a small storefront on Boyertown's main street. According to Grumblatt: "We went from a homebrew software product to an actual company." As sales and the customer base grew, it was time to move again, this time to a larger rental space for development, staging, delivery and support. The company headquarters has been at its current Boyertown location since November 1997.

Time has been kind to Gateway and not just in office size. From a single initial customer in 1988, Gateway now boasts a large and loyal customer base encompassing over 400 venues in 40 countries on six of the seven continents. The company employee base has also grown over the years, beginning with a team of three, Gateway now employs 93 employees at its corporate, Canadian and U.K. offices.

Gateway CEO and President, Michael Andre, is thrilled to keep the forward momentum: "July has been a fantastic time in the history of Gateway Ticketing Systems. We had our 25th anniversary since the incorporation of the company, and broke ground on a project that will define the next quarter century of what Gateway Ticketing Sys-

tems will become. After many months of preparation, the construction phase of this project has begun and we are celebrating the future of Gateway Ticketing Systems."

• [www.gatewayticketing.com](http://www.gatewayticketing.com)

Gateway Ticketing Systems recently celebrated 25 years in business with a groundbreaking ceremony for their new corporate headquarters. The groundbreaking ceremony included speeches by Gateway founders Michael Andre and Peter Grumblatt. Completion of the \$7 million building is scheduled for spring 2014.

COURTESY GATEWAY

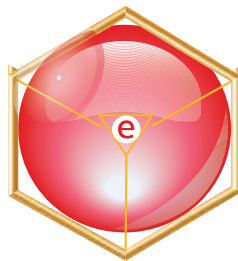


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\* "Restaurants & Institutions" magazine



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# Chance Rides experiencing super growth, now at capacity

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

WICHITA, Kan. — The 300,000 square feet of manufacturing space of Chance Rides is full to capacity.

"Any business we do now," said Dick Chance, "will be for 2015."

And, Chance feels the increase in business the company has experienced over the last several years is directly due to having the right product at the right time.

"We have had a great marketing strategy," he said. "Michael (Chance) has done a really good job with that."

Chance said the company, much like the rest of the nation, felt the blow the year 2008 dealt. But, by 2010, he saw things coming back. The company began experiencing a bump in business of about 10 to 15 percent annually until this past year when the company felt a 20 percent bump.

"We are very happy with the projects we have," Chance said.

For starters, the company will deliver a new ride, the Hyper Coaster GT-X100, to an amusement park in the spring. The ride is scheduled to open in May 2014.

An announcement to where it will go is expected to be made during the International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions Expo in Orlando this month.

The coaster, said Chance, is 100 feet tall with the first drop being 100 feet. Track length is 2,500 feet. The profile for the coaster was designed by Alan Schilke, Ride Centerline.

"We are very excited about the action and all the thrills of the coaster," Chance said. "Fabrication is in full swing. We also have a new car and train design for this coaster, which we will have at our booth at IAAPA."

Other specifications of the new GT-X100 coaster include:

- 2 minutes of ride time;
- 55 mph, maximum speed;
- 20 passenger per train
- 800 pph with 2 trains.

Another new ride from Chance Rides, which is set to open in April 2014, is the SkyQuest, a suspended monorail gondola ride for the Indianapolis Zoo. The ride is a sightseeing attraction that will

let guests view the zoo's new orangutan exhibit. The ride takes guests over the exhibit on 1,800 feet of track.

Chance said this fixed track trolley ride is being marketed to zoos because it can go just about anywhere.

"It can turn corners and it can go up and down," Chance said, "unlike other suspended gondola rides."

This particular project at the Indianapolis Zoo presented several challenges. One was establishing how high an orangutan could jump, research the zoo performed, so specifications could be shared with Chance Rides. And, because orangutans are able to climb just about anything, Chance said his company had to come up with ways to erect the ride's columns outside the exhibit fencing.

"We had to have spans of 150 feet between columns," Chance said.

This ride is currently being installed at the zoo and there are other zoos very interested in this attraction. Other specifications of the Indianapolis installation include:

- 18 gondolas;
- 4 passengers per gondola, 4 adults or 1 wheelchair and 1 adult;
- 72 total passengers on track layout;
- Loading for 2 gondolas simultaneously;
- 4 gondolas span capacity between supports, and
- 2 mph maximum speed.

Chance Rides delivered its first family thrill Freestyle ride to Guy Leavitt, Ray Cammack Shows, at the Arizona State Fair, Phoenix, on opening day Oct. 11. The fair runs through Nov. 4.

"It is doing great there," said Chance in mid-October. "In the first weekend, they were surpassing their expectations on the number of rides."

The company is building its second Freestyle for next year and there is a tentative contract for that ride by another carnival. The Freestyle has a classic spinning, tilting motion. It features outward-facing seating for up to 24 riders and provides easy entry for loading and unloading.

Chance Rides included over-the-shoulder restraints and the pre-programmed electric variable speed drive offers a variety of ride experiences. The portable model is com-



**Chance Rides President Dick Chance stands in front of track for SkyQuest, a suspended monorail ride for the Indianapolis Zoo's 2014 season. AT/GARY SLADE**

pletely self-contained on one, 48-foot trailer.

"The Freestyle is a redesigned Trabant that my dad designed in 1963," Chance said.

Chance Rides will feature the Freestyle park model at the IAAPA Expo this month.

Tried and true Chance products also are on scheduled to be delivered next spring. Among them is a swinging ship ride for Holiday World, Santa Claus, Ind., which is themed to the Mayflower.

In addition, the company has a Family Coaster in the shop. That ride is expected to be delivered to a wildlife zoo in Phoenix, Ariz., and should open in the spring.

"We have done quite a few of these over the years," Chance said. "The biggest one of this type so far was for Six Flags Over Georgia in Atlanta.

This one is about that same size."

Chance Rides' Family Coaster is available in various themes and has applications for both indoor and outdoor facilities. It features a series of dips and turns with adult-size cars. Sixteen seats are standard with the option of 20.

"We have a C.P. Huntington going into a zoo in Mexico and we just sold another one to Little Rock Zoo (Little Rock, Ark.)," Chance said. "And, we have six Tramstars sold." Chance Rides' people mover Tramstar operates with gasoline or diesel fuel and can seat up to 104 passengers with up to three trailing units.

And, as if all this is not enough, the company's off-road vehicles, Ride the Ducks, business also is going well. Chance said they have five orders for Herschend Family En-

tertainment, all to be delivered next spring.

Even though Chance is not currently in construction on a Bussink-designed R80XL Giant Wheel, Chance said the company is happy to have the exclusive manufacturing agreement in North America under Chance American Wheels. The wheel features either 54, eight-person or 27, 16-passenger heated and air-conditioned enclosed gondolas.

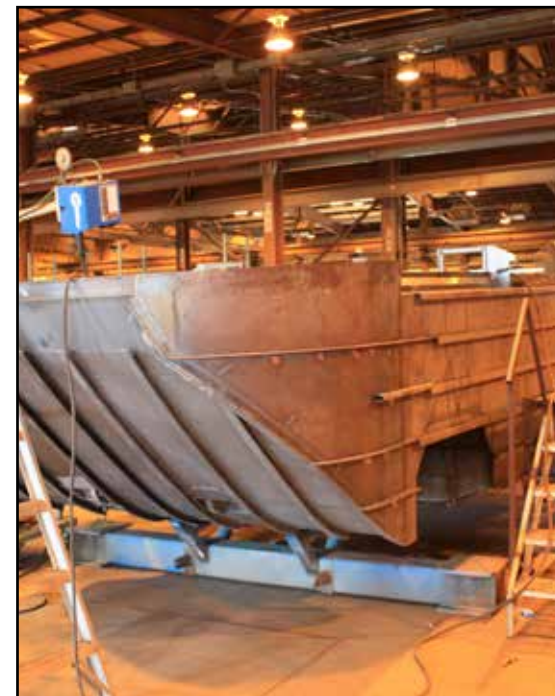
Other standard features include wireless communication and SOS system for the gondolas, sound system with MP3 players, LED lighting, 432-passenger capacity, and is 250 feet tall and 230 feet in diameter. Theoretic hourly capacity is approximately 1,700 passengers.

Chance said for the most part, Chance Rides does all its own ride fabrication, but when times get overloaded, the company turns to Intermountain Lift, a steel fabrication company in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"But, we always do our own design and engineering," Chance said.

Chance Rides' increase in business has created increased job opportunity Chance said. In 2008, the company employed between 80 and 90 individuals. Today, the company has 150 employees.

Fortunately, so far the 300,000 square feet in the manufacturing plant has been sufficient space for the growing company.



**At left, this Chance C. P. Huntington train is heading for a customer in Mexico and is unit number 375. At right is the base for one of the Ride the Ducks being built for Herschend Family Entertainment. AT/GARY SLADE**



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Hyper GT-X



R80 II XL  
Giant Wheel



SkyQuest™



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# All aboard!

## *Holiday World rolls out new Chance C.P. Huntington locomotive*

SANTA CLAUS, Ind. — One of the first rides that opened at Holiday World was the Freedom Train (formerly known as the Santa Claus Land Railroad). Now 67 years later, Holiday World has introduced a new train to the park's ride line-up.

Holiday World's Director of Communications Paula Werne explains: "The Freedom Train was the only original ride still in operation from our first season (Santa Claus Land opened on August 3, 1946). Our founder, Louis J. Koch, was a train aficionado. He hired Ted Buehn, a model train enthusiast, to build this 1/8th scale train based on a Baltimore and Ohio locomotive. Constructed at the family's Evansville, Indiana, business — George Koch Sons — the Santa Claus Land Railroad was later called the Freedom Train; it ran a loop at the southeast corner of the park, past statues of Mother Goose characters from the 1950s.



**Chance Rides recently supplied a new C.P. Huntington diesel locomotive for Holiday World in Santa Claus, Ind. The new train will operate in Mother Goose Land as the Holidog Express. The new train, above, replaces the original train, right, formerly known as the Santa Claus Land Railroad and Freedom Train, which will remain in a static display for park guests to enjoy. COURTESY CHANCE / HOLIDAY WORLD**

When it became apparent during off-season maintenance that the train was no longer track worthy, we researched options for restoring it and plan to have it on display in the park for future generations to see.

"Meanwhile, we contacted Chance Rides and purchased a

C.P. Huntington Train to run through Mother Goose Land this season," added Werne. "Our new train is called Holidog Express, named for our mascot. Holidog Express has been very well received and we're looking forward to many more years of happy children of all ages riding



through Mother Goose Land on our beautiful new train.

The new train, and its passenger coaches sport a beautiful red-and-black color scheme along with chrome accents. It is only the second model manufactured by Chance Rides with a diesel engine.

Chance Manufacturing

Co. was founded in 1961 by Harold Chance when he began producing the C.P. Huntington model trains. Today,

those same trains are still being manufactured with the same skilled craftsmanship they have been for more than 50 years.

## *Severn Lamb delivers two new 'Texan-rail' trains to Louisville Zoo*

UNITED KINGDOM — Severn Lamb, the U.K. transport engineering systems manufacturer, has announced the delivery of two new Texan rail trains to Louisville [Kentucky] Zoo.

The new trains are replacements for those previously in operation at the zoo and were ordered after an accident in 2009 when one of the old trains derailed. Historically, an open air train ride has been a central part of the zoo experience, but no such rides have been available since the accident. Severn Lamb subsequently won the contract to design and build two new trains for Louisville Zoo to begin operation in the summer of this year and it's now full steam ahead.

The two beautifully detailed Texan trains operate on a 24-inch gauge track and are made up of 4-4-0 locomotives and eight-wheel diesel hydraulic tenders, each pulling three open style coaches. Each coach can accommodate up to 21 seated passengers in a forward facing configuration, providing an excellent overall capac-

ity per train of 63. Wheelchair accessibility has also been incorporated into one of the carriages on each train meaning all visitors to the zoo are able to enjoy the experience.

The trains run continuously on a 1.2 mile oval track around the zoo's perimeter and each ride take approximately 17 minutes. The venue has employed more than a dozen workers to operate the train service, all of whom are trained as engineers, conductors and station managers. The three positions are regularly rotated and all the members of the team who will work on the trains have been trained by amusement industry consultant Ken Vondriska.

"We are delighted to announce the delivery of these two new trains to Louisville Zoo," said Severn Lamb Managing Director Patrick Lamb. "The resumption of the train rides comes four years after a derailment of one of the zoo's previous trains so not surprisingly they looked long and hard at which supplier to choose when looking for re-



**Severn Lamb has delivered two new Texan rail trains to the Louisville Zoo. The two trains operate on a 24-inch gauge track and are made up of 4-4-0 locomotives and eight-wheel diesel hydraulic tenders, each pulling three open style coaches. Each coach can accommodate up to 21 seated passengers for overall capacity per train of 63. The new trains are replacements for those previously in operation at the zoo and were ordered after an accident in 2009 when one of the old trains derailed. COURTESY SEVERN LAMB**

placements. We are therefore very proud that they chose Severn Lamb.

"We have representatives based in the U.S. providing expert advice on our range of rail trains along with our other people movers, while we have also helped the zoo with operational training. Additionally,

we have a dedicated engineering partner to advise on track and infrastructure projects and this results in all of our U.S. clients being able to receive a full tried and tested turnkey solution.

"Everyone associated with Louisville Zoo is delighted with the quality of product and

service attained from Severn Lamb and we are sure guests will enjoy the trains for many, many years to come."

The new trains, along with track refurbishment work, upgrades and related drainage improvements, represent a total investment of over \$1,000,000 for the zoo.



# Europa-Park, Mack Rides conduct training course for Ocean Kingdom

RUST, Germany — Thirteen employees from the new Ocean Kingdom theme park in Hengqin Island, China, attended an intensive training course at Europa-Park, Oct. 6-10, 2013. Experts from Mack Rides and Europa-Park prepared their Far Eastern colleagues for their future duties in the Chimelong Group theme park.

Manufacturer Mack Rides is one of the Chinese theme park's main suppliers, delivering a total of four attractions and rides to China. This made the training and discussion opportunity for German and Chinese colleagues an obvious choice.

During his time as Chairman of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) in 2012, Roland Mack often drew attention to the subject of safety in the industry. The harmonization of international safety standards was a particular concern for him. This joint initiative between Europa-Park, Mack Rides and Ocean Kingdom is an excel-

## SAFETY

lent example of successful co-operation in the theme park industry.

"It was a great project. If we are in a position to pass on our long lasting experience at Europa-Park, then of course we will do so," commented Roland Mack.

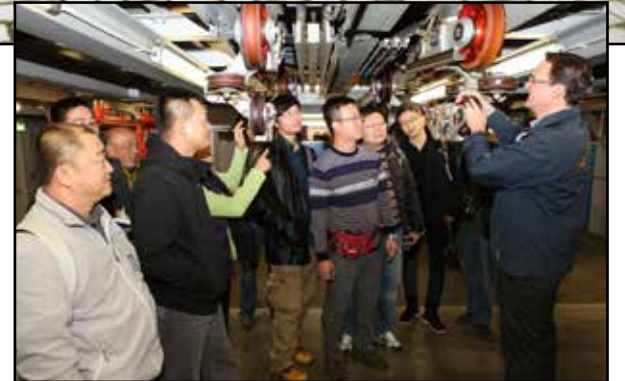
Paul Yuen, deputy general manager of Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, summed things up: "The training at Europa-Park was superb and we are very happy that we got the chance to participate. The exchange with our colleagues from Germany was interesting. The high standard at which Europa-Park operates is impressive and we are already looking forward to bringing everything we learned back to China and our colleagues there."

The U.S. \$2 billion marine-based theme park is part of a 2,000-acre resort that is being developed by the Chimelong Group. The park is expected to open in late 2013.



Roland and Michael Mack (3rd and 4th from the right) of the Europa-Park owner family and Circus Priest Ernst Heller (right) congratulate the 13 participants from Ocean Kingdom on their training course help at the park. At right, Europa-Park employees explain Mack Rides's Blue Fire coaster during a hands-on training class.

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# NEWS & NOTES

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## 2014 AIMS Intl. Safety Seminar: call for instructors

ORLANDO, Fla. — Have you ever wanted to teach at an AIMS Safety Seminar? The education committee is searching for individuals who would like to present a new or existing class at the AIMS Safety Seminar, January 13-17, 2014. If you think you have what it takes, contact Patty Beazley, education chairperson at [beazleyp@comcast.net](mailto:beazleyp@comcast.net).

## AIMS International seeking items for annual Silent Auction

ORLANDO, Fla. — AIMS International would like to remind members of the amusement industry to donate silent auction items to benefit the 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar, Jan. 12-17, 2014 in Orlando, Fla.

AIMS is always looking for items that can be used to raise funds to keep audio/visual and other equipment used in the classroom updated and as current as possible.

The silent auction does just that, as attendees bid on their favorite items that fit their individual collections.

To donate items, simply send them to:

**AIMS Silent Auction**  
**Holly Coston**  
**1829 N. Richmond**  
**Wichita, Kansas 67203**  
**(714) 425-5747**

The AIMS board of directors, seminar instructors and volunteers all thank you for your continued support of the AIMS Safety Seminar.

**Patty Beazley**  
*When Pigs Fly*  
AIMS seminar director and  
education chairperson  
[beazleyp@comcast.net](mailto:beazleyp@comcast.net)

ORLANDO, Fla. — The 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar will be held once again in Orlando, Florida at the Doubletree by Hilton at SeaWorld January 12-17, 2014. Registration will be Sunday, January 12 from 2-6 p.m. An opening reception will be held following registration from 6-8 p.m. All attendees are encouraged to attend the reception as we make important announcements for the week and have fun networking with fellow industry members. Classes run Monday through Friday, January 13-17 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.

The AIMS Education Committee has been hard at work planning new classes and tweaking favorites to provide an exceptional educational week for our attendees. The committee is pleased to announce that there are more than 90-plus hours of new classes. New classes include: Carnival Employee Training; Fun Houses & Dark Rides; Standards for Design and Pool Instruction; ADA for Aquatics; Overview of Underwater Inspection and Maintenance of Amusement Rides; Arch Flash Awareness; Wood Pole Inspections; Introduction to Zip Lines: Operation and Standards; Operations: "Duck Dynasty" Style and Theme Park Budgeting to name only a few.

AIMS will also be offering specialty track series for the following:

- OSHA – 10 hour track
- Certified Pool Operator (CPO) – 16 hour track
- ASTM

## Register now for the 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar



The 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar offers more than 350 hours of classes, including 90 hours of new classes. At left, the AIMS Silent Auction is always a student favorite with lots of merchandise and odd trinkets to bid on. Bring your cookie jar money, you never know what may be a must-have item to bid on!

AT FILE

reception, and two snacks and lunch daily. The price to learn from professionals in the amusement industry, network with your peers and make life time friends – priceless!

Visit [www.aimsintl.org](http://www.aimsintl.org) to register, download a list of classes offered and learn more about the hotel accommodations.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone in January 2014!

If you have further questions about the Safety Seminar, or want to join AIMS International, place stop by the **AIMS booth (#5438)** at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in Orlando, Fla., Nov. 19-22.

Until then — safe travels and Happy Thanksgiving!

- Carnival
- Aquatics
- Leadership

The Education Committee has secured the best instructors in the field of the amusement industry for the week of the seminar. Classes delve into the areas of aquatics, operations, inspections, maintenance, safety and suppliers.

The AIMS certification testing include the following areas:

- Operations – Level I & II
- Maintenance – Level I & II
- Aquatics – Level I
- Associated Ride Inspector (ARI)
- Certified Ride Inspector (CRI)
- Professional Ride Inspector (PRI)

New for 2014, the Level I tests for Operations, Maintenance and ARI will be offered in Spanish! The 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar will not be disappointing for those who attend.

Where else can you continue your education in the amusement industry with a choice of over 350 hours of classes? The 2014 AIMS Safety Seminar!

Tuition for the AIMS Safety Seminar is only \$595, which includes a completion certificate, continuing education units (CEU's), opening re-

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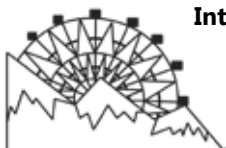
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## Ride Operator Trainer Certification returns to Las Vegas in 2014

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The team of When Pigs Fly, LLC: Creative Operational Concepts will be hosting their annual Ride Operator Trainer Certification (ROTC) February 5-7, 2014 in Las Vegas, Nevada at Circus Circus Hotel and Casino.

ROTC is an interactive hands-on, three-day "train the trainer" instructor course that provides creative teaching techniques for front line ride trainers. Instruction includes how to teach ride operator safety using the Ten Critical Components and the associated skills/tasks that form a cycle of operation for any attraction.

ROTC School teaches component skills through the instructional philosophy of Learn it! Link it! Live it!

•Learn it! is the information that the trainee must know about the skill or task, and background information so they understand why they perform the task in the manner taught.

•Link it! is the portion of the training that allows the candidate to experience and practice the concepts being taught through demonstrations, exercises, activities, drills, and simulations to reiterate the importance of a task or skill. During this experiential learning

### SAFETY

## ROTC

Ride Operator Trainer Certification  
February 5-7, 2014  
Las Vegas, Nev.

portion of the class, candidates practice concepts until they are able to grasp them and relate to the importance of the exercise.

•Live it! is the key to making sure that the standard of performance is met in the field. The trainee candidate learns the specific expectation and level of performance for each task and skill to a standard.

Instructor trainers leave ROTC School with a ready to implement rides trainer with the materials and tools to improve the front line ride operator performance through consistent instruction. Materials include a manual, activity guide, teaching activities and resources.

For further information, review the website of [www.creativeoperationalconcepts.com](http://www.creativeoperationalconcepts.com).



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[sales@reamusement.com](mailto:sales@reamusement.com)



# NAARSO's 27th Annual Safety Forum heading to Charlotte

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The board of directors and education committee members for NAARSO are pleased to announce the 27th Annual Safety Forum to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Carowinds, a Cedar Fair facility, will be the gracious host for all of the hands-on training this year. This will be NAARSO's first return to Carowinds since 2004 and the association is excited to be invited back.

The week's training will include instruction in the basics of amusement ride safety as well as many advanced classes for those individuals with multiple years of experience. Additional training will occur in the area of zip lines and ropes courses. New electrical and welding courses will also be featured.

For attendees who own or operate a rental business,

NAARSO will provide special training the weekend before the start of our annual safety forum. Devices included in this limited specialty training are inflatables, rock walls, euro bungees, trackless trains, & mechanical bulls. Certification exams for the Limited Specialty Program will be offered on Sunday, January 26. Level I and Level II certification exams will be offered on Friday,

## SAFETY

January 30, the Amusement Ride or Device Inspector program.

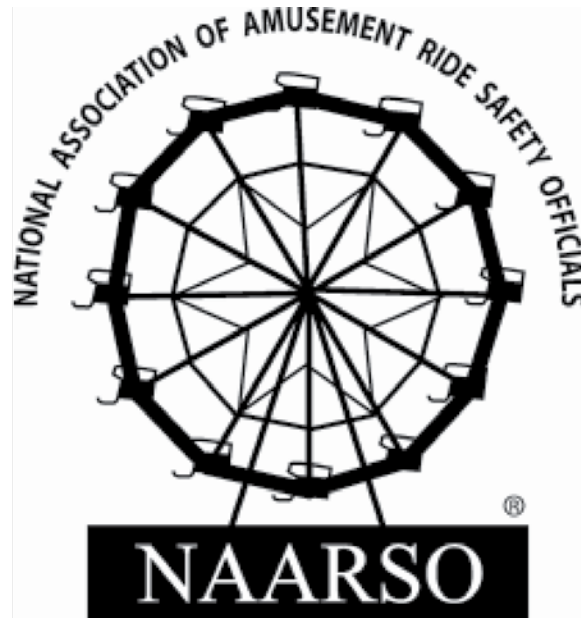
Attendees who are an operator of amusement devices, you will not want to miss the newest certification: Operations. This certification program targets the complete operation side of permanent parks, traveling shows and

operators around the industry, testing applicants on their knowledge of safe operating procedures. Seminar classes will include Ride Training, Emergency Evacuations, Weather Preparedness, Blood born Pathogens, and many other related subjects prior to the exam offered on Thursday night, January 30.

The safety seminar will be held Sunday, January 26

through Friday, January 31 at the Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel. The complete brochure can be found at the NAARSO website under the Seminars button.

The training and certification exams are just another way NAARSO lives up to its motto of *Safety Through Communication*. For more information, visit NAARSO's website at: [www.naarso.com](http://www.naarso.com).



## 27th ANNUAL SAFETY FORUM January 26 – 31, 2014

It's that time of year to begin planning on attending the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Safety Forum for the most up-to-date training and Hands-on activity experience. This year we will be traveling to Charlotte, NC with a visit to Carowinds.

### OPERATIONS LEVEL I CERTIFICATION

We are please to offer our new certification, Operations Level I. In addition to the new certification our curriculum this year will include Operational classes to support the requirements for taking the exam.

Registration will begin on Sunday, January 26, 2014, with an orientation session. Classes will end after noon on Friday, January 31 and the Level I & Level II certification exams will take place later that afternoon. Tuition cost is \$445 for current 2014 members of NAARSO, non-member's tuition cost is \$495.

The event will be held at the Sheraton Charlotte Airport located at 3315 Scott Futrell Dr, Charlotte, NC 28208.

Room rates are \$85 single/double with discounted breakfast pricing

This year you can book your room reservation on line by using the link information below:  
<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1303066192&key=CD253>

Membership Meeting will be held at the Shearton Charlotte Airport  
January 26 2014 at 1:30 p.m.

More information can be found on the website, [www.naarso.com](http://www.naarso.com)  
Under the Seminars button

### ASTM Ride Standards accepted by Bolivian Government

W. CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa., — On Aug. 23, 2013, Bolivian officials announced the acceptance of amusement ride safety standards developed by ASTM International Committee F24 on Amusement Rides and Devices. The announcement was made at a seminar on amusement ride safety in La Paz, Bolivia. The focus of the seminar was on the tremendous growth of the amusement industry sector, as well as the importance of having comprehensive safety programs for all facets of the business.

The incorporation of ASTM standards by the IBNORCA, the national standards body of Bolivia, was made possible through a memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations in 2002. ASTM worked closely with IBNORCA to facilitate review of the official Spanish translations of the ASTM F24 standards. To date, the MOU has enabled IBNORCA to utilize more than 250 ASTM standards as the basis of national standards.

Paulina Reyes, vice president of IAAPA Latin America said, "Bolivia has established a great model for other countries in Latin America that want to have high-level safety standards for the amusement industry. I would strongly suggest that countries speak with the leadership of IBNORCA to gain an understanding of their process and how they were able to quickly create consistent, effective norms utilizing ASTM F24 standards."





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New attractions aim to reel in young adults

## Las Vegas is looking to hook more thrillseekers with zip lines

**STORY:** Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — Although wagering is the primary line of work and revenue here, Sin City — in its never-ending quest to snare the leisure dollars and extend the stays of families and young adults who aren't seeking or able to gamble — is banking on a new recreational craze to string its visitors along: the zip line.

This type of specialized attraction, which proved a major hit when a temporary zip line was installed on Fremont Street three years ago, will be unspooling in bigger, more exotic ways at two new locations (one downtown, another off-Strip) by the end of the year. Meanwhile, a third, well-established operation on the outskirts of the Las Vegas Valley continues to draw the extra-adventurous.

Generating the most initial excitement, now that its debut in early November has

been announced, is the Voo Doo Zip Line at the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino on W. Flamingo Road — an unusual dual-seater which will run between two towers at the off-Strip resort.

The ride/ski lift hybrid has overcome some delays and construction of its platform on the 50th floor of the Rio's Masquerade Tower, on the patio of the VooDoo Steakhouse, was well underway as *AT* went to press. It will send passengers a third of a mile down to the roof of the 20-story Ipanema Tower and then whisk them back up to the starting point mechanically — and backward — at up to 33 mph, all the while treating them to a panoramic view from a maximum height of 490 feet above the ground. (The entire ride will last about 70 seconds.)

The VooDoo Zip Line is a combined effort of the Rio, New Capital Ventures, LLC, of Las Vegas and Utah-based ride innovator Stan Checketts. The tentative operating sched-



The dual-seater VooDoo Zip Line, a combined effort of the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino, New Capital Ventures, LLC, of Las Vegas and Utah-based ride whiz Stan Checketts, travels between the two hotel towers at a maximum height of 490 feet (platform view at left).

COURTESY VOODOO  
ZIP LINE/NEW CAPITAL VENTURES

ule will have it running from noon to midnight seven days a week, with tickets priced at \$24.99 during the day and \$37 after 5:30 p.m.

"When developing VooDoo Zip Line, we sought to create a one-of-a-kind, adrenaline-packed Vegas experience," said Joe Shortal, a partner in New Capital Ventures.

Downtown, the success-

ful zip line built and operated by Flightlinez was dismantled over the summer as the business interests behind the Fremont Street Experience reportedly decided to be more directly involved in a larger, splashier attraction. They'll soon deliver that \$11.5 million, 128-foot-high SlotZilla, which offers two zip line take-off points at different height

(and price) levels.

Hawaii-based Skyline Eco Adventures served as a consultant on the project.

Several months behind schedule, SlotZilla nonetheless showed substantial progress by mid-October, with its tower topped-off, its slot machine theming in place and much of its extensive flash — including

► See ZIP LINES, page 68

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Shown above is a new zip line attraction built at a cost of \$11.5 million by the Fremont Street Experience, with consultation by Skyline Eco Adventures of Hawaii, the heavily themed, 128-foot-tall Slotzilla is expected to leave a big, collective tourism footprint in downtown Las Vegas. It could debut by the end of the year.

COURTESY COUNTOUR ENTERTAINMENT/FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE

## ►ZIP LINES

Continued from page 67

two flanking, 37-foot-tall neon showgirls — in place. Zip line length, when complete, will be more than 1,700 feet and end at a platform in front of the Golden Gate casino; one of the experiences will involve prone seating and power-launching. Tickets are expected to cost in the range of \$20-40.

Flightlinez, the zip line company that was nudged off of Fremont Street after reinvigorating tourism in that part of Las Vegas, is still enjoying success with its rural, seven-year-old Bootleg Canyon Park operation near Boulder City ([flightlinezbootleg.com](http://flightlinezbootleg.com)). This mile-and-a-half-long attraction, properly described as an eco-adventure and the first of its type in the region, takes the zip line experience to a greater, yet more traditional extreme — carrying about 50,000 riders annually between far-flung desert hilltops on four separate lines while affording views of Las Vegas, Lake Mead and the Eldorado Valley.

Flightlinez requires a

pre-flight safety class and advance reservations, as well as supplies transportation and a partial hike to the top of 3,600-foot-plus Red Mountain. Weight limits and other restrictions apply. The company also provides complimentary hourly shuttle service from and to Las Vegas.

(Notably, Flightlinez overcame more than a year of local opposition in Venice Beach, Calif., to open a temporary zip line last summer. The status of that attraction's return next year was unknown as AT went to press.)

In typical, gleeful Vegas-overkill fashion, still another zip line ride is on the horizon. Clark County has approved plans for MGM Resorts International to string a zip line, at peak platform height of 340 feet, between its Luxor and Excalibur hotel-casino properties at the south end of the Strip. The project, to be supervised by Ziptrek Ecotours of British Columbia, is awaiting Federal Aviation Administration approval due to its proximity to McCarran International Airport.



Flightlinez, which paved the way for Las Vegas zip lines with a successful temporary operation on Fremont Street that preceded Slotzilla, offers a more traditionally rugged and rural zip line experience at Bootleg Canyon in nearby Boulder City. The multi-part course over desert slopes and canyons traverses 1.5 miles of terrain. COURTESY FLIGHTLINEZ



# U.S. family-owned amusement parks cornerstone for industry fun

**STORY:** Ron Gustafson  
Special to Amusement Today

When it comes to the backbone of the United States' economy, it could be said that it's all in the family.

More than 60 percent of the workforce across the nation is employed by family-owned businesses, according to Family Enterprise USA (FEUSA), an independent nonprofit organization based in Minneapolis, Minn.

Family businesses also contribute to the majority — 57 percent — of the nation's gross national product, FEUSA said in a 2011 report.

The amusement park industry plays an important role in the business climate, providing hundreds of thousands of jobs and pumping billions of dollars into the nation's economy.

Amusement parks and attractions in the U.S. were poised to entertain more than 300 million people during the summer of 2013, according to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), a trade organization in Alexandria, Va.

While most large theme parks are operated by public corporations, there are more than 60 family-owned amusement parks — big and small — catering to thrill-seekers of all ages.

"To me, family-owned amusement parks are what give the industry its soul," noted **Jim Futrell**, historian for the **National Amusement Park Historical Association (NAPHA)**, based in Lombard, Ill. "They each reflect the unique personality of their owner and are not just businesses but cherished heirlooms that the current generation cares for to pass on to



Above, this giant witch's head that serves as a slide is always popular with kids at Enchanted Forest. At left, **Raleigh Harrison 4** (left) and **Finley Williams, 1**, represent the fifth generation at **Dixie Landin' & Blue Bayou** in **Baton Rouge, La.**, as they ride this rare **Old 99** train. COURTESY ENCHANTED FOREST AND DIXIE LANDIN'



**Rush family members, friends and Dallas Cowboys quarterback Roger Staubach** (seated in drivers seat) pose for this **1971 season opening photo** at **Sandy Lake Amusement Park**. COURTESY SANDY LAKE

the next. Like so many other industries, the large corporations have come to dominate the amusement park industry, making the remaining family-owned parks that much more special."

Futrell assisted *Amusement Today* in compiling a current list of family-owned parks operating in the U.S. Of those, *Amusement Today* obtained a sampling of the makeup of several parks and what operators believe set them apart in today's competitive market for the discretionary dollar.

## Five and counting

Most within the industry are quick to point out that it's a unique business and extremely demanding. Operating an amusement park is a love it or

leave it proposition due to the challenges that keep the turnstiles spinning year after year. Many will tell you that it's a business that "gets into your blood" with countless days of long hours and hard work and, perhaps, no family in the industry can attest to these facts better than the Rushes of **Sandy Lake Park** in Carrollton, Texas.

"We are now fifth-generation amusement park owners and operators," noted President and General Manager **Frank Rush III**. "My best memories are based on the many events held here in our 43-year history and of Craterville Park near Lawton, Okla., which my grandparents founded in 1927."

When it comes to a traditional amusement park, **Sandy Lake** appears to fit the mold perfectly with a selection of classic rides. The lineup includes: **Rock-O-Plane**, **Spider** (both Eyerly Aircraft), **Paratrooper** (Frank Hrubetz Co.), **Scrambler** (Eli Bridge Co.), **Little Dipper Roller Coaster** and boats (**Allan Herschell**) and a rare **Pretzel** dark ride.

Covering 60 acres, the park boasts 19 rides and other attractions and an extensive picnic grounds. Rush said the park hosts the largest privately-run school music competition in the nation, titled **FunFest**, that starts in late March and concludes in mid-May.

"Many people recall their childhood experience at their hometown amusement park and consider our park a part of their heritage," he said of the business. "It's very rewarding to hear their comments."

## Connecticut family affair

Tucked away in the rolling hills of northwestern Connecticut is **Quassy Amusement Park**, a lakeside facility that got its start in 1908 as a "trolley park" — then owned and operated by an electrified rail company in nearby Waterbury.

In 1937 the park became family-owned when the late **John Frantzis** and two business partners acquired the 20-acre property in Middlebury.

Quassy has blossomed in recent years and now employs fourth-generation members of the Frantzis family.

"We took an initiative a decade ago to vastly improve the property," said park President **Eric Anderson**, who started working at Quassy at age 11.

Anderson learned the rigors of the business as a youngster and married into the Frantzis family prior to becoming an owner.

Along with **George Frantzis II**, he oversees the day-to-day operations of the property, which now includes a full-fledged waterpark. During the height of the season there are up to a dozen members of the Frantzis and Anderson families working throughout the facility.

"So many of us grew up here, it's really a rite of passage for the youngsters in our fami-

lies to work here," Frantzis said of family involvement.

New rides and attractions have been added in recent years with the **Splash Away Bay** waterpark virtually doubling in size for the 2013 season.

"What really put us on the map was our **Wooden Warrior** roller coaster," Anderson said of the park's marquee ride which opened in 2011. The ride was the first junior coaster designed by The Gravity Group of Cincinnati, Ohio, and the first in North America to feature the state-of-the-art **Timberliner** train by Gravitykraft, a sister firm of The Gravity Group.

"It has drawn international attention and many accolades," Frantzis asserted. "The ride has been rated among the top 25 wooden coasters in the world and each year we draw a new audience here just to ex-

► See **FAMILY**, page 70

## Biggest challenges facing today's operators?

**Top answers:** Government regulations and escalating operational costs.

## Some other thoughts:

"For us, it's making sure people understand it's worth the drive to our relatively remote location." — **Jim Miller**, Santa's helper at Santa's Village, Jefferson, N.H.

"Working on legislation for a post-Labor Day start to school and other legislative issues." — **Carl Crider, Jr.**, president and general manager, Del Grosso's Amusement Park, Tipton, Pa.

"Kids don't play outside much anymore. Too busy with iPads and iPhones." — **Liz Haynes Harrison**, director of marketing, Blue Bayou/Dixie Landin', Baton Rouge, La.

"Affordable Care Act. A large part of our business is corporate picnics and companies have had drastic cuts in employee events directly attributed to the uncertainty of this law." — **Frank Rush III**, president, Sandy Lake Park, Dallas, Texas.

## Fondest memory about your business you would like to share

We wove many of the responses into the body of the story, but here's one worth a rerun:

**"Telling the commissioners of El Paso County, Texas, to take a hike and moving (the park)."**

—**Pat Thomson**  
Western Playland  
President  
Sunland Park, N.M.



►FAMILY

Continued from page 69  
perience it.”

On the boardwalk

The “World’s Best Seaside Amusement Park” — **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**, Santa Cruz, Calif. — has been family-owned for the past 70 years (1943).

The 14-acre property has numerous claims to fame as it has appeared in a number of major motion pictures and is home to two National Historic Landmarks: Giant Dipper roller coaster (1924) and its classic Looft carousel (1911).

*Amusement Today* has honored the facility as the “Best Seaside Park” for the past seven years at the publication’s Golden Ticket Awards. Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk hosted the 2013 awards in September.

Park President **Charles Canfield** has many memories to share, but “getting to know other park operators and manufacturers who keep the industry going” ranks high on his list.

Four family members are currently involved in the operation, which features 35 rides and attractions.

The brothers Morey

Back on the East Coast, **Morey’s Piers and Beachfront Waterparks**, Wildwood, N.J., has four amusement piers and two waterparks, consisting of around 18 acres.

Brothers **Will** and **Jack Morey**, who oversee the operations, are the second of three generations actively involved since the family business ramped up in 1969. More than two-dozen family members have contributed in some capacity at the properties over the past several years.

With 68 rides in the parks, Will says “Jersey Shore culture” and free admission to the amusement piers are among prominent points that set them apart from other properties.

“We have a strong lineup of rides and attractions in a very clean, friendly and service-assertive environment,” he noted. Will, president and CEO of the organization, is also the current chairman of the IAAPA Board of Directors. Jack is executive vice president of the Morey organization.

Their late father, **Wilbert C. Morey**, was inducted into

the IAAPA Hall of Fame in 2001.

“He had passion (for the industry), drive and courage,” Will said of their father.

Larger properties

When **David W. Freed**, president and CEO of **Lagoon**, Farmington, Utah, answered the brief questionnaire for this article, we were immediately drawn to a particular statement.

His fondest memory about being in the industry is: “working with my 92-year-old father, who still comes to the park four days a week.”

Seven family members are currently involved in the operation, which is one of the largest family-owned parks in the nation. Lagoon features 52 rides, including a number of modern roller coasters, along with a mix of classics placed throughout 160 acres.

The Freed family leased the property starting in 1946 and purchased the park in 1983.

Simply put, Freed said the best thing about the amusement park business is that “people like what we do.”

The largest theme park in the Northwest is relatively young (1988) in comparison to other properties of its size in the country. **Silverwood Theme Park** and **Boulder Beach Waterpark**, Athol, Idaho, are the creation of owner **Gary Norton**.

Covering more than 200 acres, the sprawling park is loaded with big thrills, including two wooden roller coasters and the first Corkscrew coaster introduced in 1975 by the former Arrow Dynamics manufacturing firm of Clearfield, Utah.

The Corkscrew originally operated at California’s **Knott’s Berry Farm** before moving to Silverwood in 1990.

Today, the park features more than 65 rides and attractions with 12 family members involved.

Norton admits it has been memorable watching his children grow up at the park and take positions of responsibility within the operation.

“The next generation — my grandchildren — is now growing up in the park and several are starting their work experience at Silverwood, too,” he said.

Eleven members of three families are active in the oper-

Family owned amusement parks

Park, Location	Opened	Family owner	Since
<b>Adventure Park USA</b> , New Market, Md.	2004	Stottlemeyer	2004
<b>Adventureland</b> , Altoona, Iowa	1974	Krantz	1974
<b>Adventureland</b> , East Farmingdale, N.Y.	1962	Gentile	1978
<b>Atlantic Beach Park</b> , Misquimicut, R.I.	1920	Trefes	1920
<b>Beech Bend Park</b> , Bowling Green, Ky.	1888	Jones	1987
<b>Bowcraft Amusement Park</b> , Scotch Plains, N.J.	1946	Marke	1996
<b>Camden Park</b> , Huntington, W.V.	1903	Boylin	1946-80/1995
<b>Canobie Lake Park</b> , Salem, N.H.	1902	Berni/Captell/Ulaky	1958
<b>Casino Pier</b> , Seaside Heights, N.J.	1932	Storino	2002
<b>Cliff’s Amusement Park</b> , Albuquerque, N.M.	1964	Hammond/Hays	1964
<b>Del Grosso’s Amusement Park</b> , Tipton, Pa.	1907	DelGrosso	1947
<b>Deno’s Wonder Wheel Park</b> , Brooklyn, N.Y.	1980	Vourderis	1980
<b>Dixie Landin’ &amp; Blue Bayou</b> , Baton Rouge, La.	1999	Haynes	1999
<b>Enchanted Forest</b> , Old Forge, N.Y.	1956	Noonan	1977
<b>Enchanted Forest</b> , Salem, Ore.	1971	Tofte	1971
<b>Fun Spot America</b> , Orlando, Fla.	1997	Arie	1997
<b>Fun Spot USA</b> , Kissimmee, Fla.	2007	Arie	2007
<b>Funland</b> , Rehoboth Beach, Del.	1939	Fasnacht	1962
<b>Gillian’s Funland</b> , Sea Isle City, N.J.	2009	Gillian	2009
<b>Gillian’s Wonderland Pier</b> , Ocean City, N.J.	1965	Gillian	1965
<b>Go Carts Plus</b> , Williamsburg, Va.	1989	Miller	1989
<b>Harris Hill Park</b> , Elmira, N.Y.	1947	Goodwin	2002
<b>Hoffman’s Playland</b> , Latham, N.Y.	1952	Hoffman	1952
<b>Holiday World</b> , Santa Claus, Ind.	1946	Koch	1946
<b>Jenkinson’s Boardwalk</b> , Point Pleasant Beach, N.J.	1928	Storino	1978
<b>Joyland</b> , Lubbock, Texas	1946	Dean	1971
<b>Keansburg Amusement Park</b> , Keansburg, N.J.	1904	Gehlhaus	1904-73/1995
<b>Kiddie Acres</b> , Austin, Texas	1987	N/A	1987
<b>Knoebel’s Amusement Resort</b> , Elysburg, Pa.	1926	Knoebel	1926
<b>Lagoon Park</b> , Farmington, Utah	1896	Freed	1946
<b>Lake Winnepesaukah</b> , Rossville, Ga.	1925	Dixon/White/Rhoads	1925
<b>Lakemont Park</b> , Altoona, Pa.	1894	Albarano	1988
<b>Lakeside Amusement Park</b> , Denver, Colo.	1908	Krasner	1936
<b>Land of Make Believe</b> , Hope, N.J.	1954	Maier	1954
<b>Magic Forest</b> , Lake George, N.Y.	1963	Gillette	1963
<b>Memphis Kiddie Park</b> , Brooklyn, Ohio	1952	Winter	1952
<b>Morey’s Piers</b> , Wildwood, N.J.	1969	Morey	1969
<b>Mount Olympus Theme Park</b> , Wisconsin Dells, Wis.	1991	Laskaris	1991
<b>Ober Gatlinburg</b> , Gatlinburg, Tenn.	1972	Anders	1972
<b>Playland’s Castaway Cove</b> , Ocean City, N.J.	1939	Simpson	1959
<b>Quassy Amusement Park</b> , Middlebury, Conn.	1908	Frantzis	1937
<b>Sandy Lake Amusement Park</b> , Carrollton, Texas	1969	Rush	1969
<b>Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk</b> , Santa Cruz, Calif.	1907	Canfield	1943
<b>Santa’s Village</b> , Jefferson, N.H.	1953	Gainer	1953
<b>Santa’s Workshop</b> , North Pole, Calif.	1956	Haggar	1957
<b>Santa’s Land</b> , Cherokee, N.C.	1966	Lyons	N/A
<b>Sea Breeze Amusement Park</b> , Rochester, N.Y.	1879	Long/Norris/Hoffsass	1937
<b>Silver Dollar City</b> , Silver Dollar City, Mo.	1960	Herschend	1960
<b>Silverwood Theme Park</b> , Athol, Idaho	1988	Norton	1988
<b>Storybook Land</b> , Cardiff, N.J.	1955	Fricano	1955
<b>Strickers Grove</b> , Ross, Ohio	1972	Stricker	1972
<b>The Kiddie Park</b> , San Antonio, Texas	1925	Weaver	2010
<b>Trimper’s Rides and Amusements</b> , Ocean City, Md.	1893	Trimper	1893
<b>Tweetsie Railroad</b> , Blowing Rock, N.C.	1956	Robbins	1956
<b>Waldameer Park</b> , Erie, Pa.	1896	Nelson	1978
<b>Western Playland</b> , Sunland Park, N.M.	2006	Thompson	2006
<b>Wild Adventures</b> , Valdosta, Ga.	1991	Herschend	2007
<b>Wild West City</b> , Netcong, N.J.	1957	Stabile	1964
<b>Wonderland Park</b> , Amarillo, Texas	1951	Roads/Borchardt	1951

Source: Jim Futrell, National Amusement Park Historical Association, July 2013

ations at **Canobie Lake Park**, Salem, N.H.

The 60-acre park, rated among the top 10 most beautiful parks in the country, dates back to 1902 and has been family-owned since 1958.

Among the 52 rides in the park are three roller coasters, including Yankee Cannonball, a wooden out-and-back Philadelphia Toboggan Co. thriller. The ride opened in Waterbury, Conn., in 1930 before being moved to its current home in 1936.

“My dad’s enthusiasm for the business caught on with me when I was young and now my 11-year-old son has the bug,” park President **Carl Bernie** said of the business.

Free soda for all

In 1946 a small family operation in Santa Claus, Ind., opened with a fitting title: **Santa Claus Land**.

More than 60 years later the Koch family’s property has been transformed into **Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari** with 50 rides, slides and shows.

At center stage is The Voyage roller coaster (The Gravity Group) at a staggering 1.2 miles in length. The behemoth ride has been voted best wooden coaster in the world on numerous occasions since making its debut in 2006.

In 1999 the park considered making a dramatic move

in the industry by providing free soft drinks to all guests for the 2000 season.

“Before we voted, the late **Will Koch** cautioned: ‘Remember, there’s no turning back; we can’t change our minds a few years later and take this back,’” recalled **Paula Werne**, the park’s director of communications. “It was a thrilling moment and we’ve never regretted it.”

**Will Koch** and his late father, **Bill Koch Sr.**, are both members of the IAAPA Hall of Fame.

Today, seven family members are involved at the 130-acre property.

► See FAMILY, page 71



## ►FAMILY

Continued from page 70

### Racing and rides

Stock car racing is a favorite pastime in the South and **Beech Bend Park**, Bowling Green, Ky., knows it. The park is home to two racetracks along with 36 rides and water attractions sitting on more than 350 acres. Toss in the campground operated by **Dallas Jones** and family, and you have a complete family vacation package on one property.

Jones' grandson, **Reed Gonzalez**, who serves as director of operations at the facility, points out that the park's Kentucky Rumbler coaster (Great Coasters International, Sunbury, Pa.) is consistently rated among the top 25 wooden coasters on the globe.

Ten family members work at the property, which has been turning out thrills since 1987.

**Blue Bayou/Dixie Landin'**, Baton Rouge, La., dates back to 1960 and today eight members of the **Sam Haynes Jr.**, family are involved in operations.

There are 29 rides plus water attractions across 160 acres, including four roller coasters. The amusement park is believed to have one of only a few Old 99 train rides still in operation, according to family member **Liz Haynes Harrison**, director of media, marketing and special events.

### The right recipe

Many immigrants who came to this great nation in the early 1900s brought with them skills and talents that allowed them to easily secure work or even open successful businesses.

Such was the case with America's "First Family Of Pasta Sauce," the **DelGrossos** in Tipton, Pa.

When **Fred and Mafalda DelGrosso** purchased **Bland's Amusement Park** in 1946, they seized the opportunity to start selling Mafalda's mother's old-world spaghetti sauce in small batches, which were cooked up in the park's kitchen.

Today a variety of DelGrosso sauces are found on store shelves in 36 states, while the amusement park also now carries the family name.

"I learned so much from



At Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk are from left: President **Charles Canfield**, his son **Tom Canfield**, Tom's daughter **Corinn Canfield** and Charles' great nephew **Carl Rice**. The park has been Canfield family-owned for 70 years.

COURTESY SCBB



The **Gary Norton** family is seen here at its **Silverwood Theme Park** in Idaho. The family is posed with the park's ultra-popular train, one of the first rides purchased by the family.

COURTESY SILVERWOOD

my grandparents," said **Carl Crider, Jr.**, a third generation of the family and president and general manager at **DelGrosso's Amusement Park**.

"We work every day to keep their vision as we move forward," he added.

The 30-acre park has more than 30 rides and attractions, including numerous family favorites such as a Pharaoh's Fury, Yo-Yo and C.P. Huntington train (all Chance Rides). In addition there is a waterpark and go-kart track, all owned by the seven daughters and sons of the park's founders.

Six of the seven are still active in operations while seven third-generation family members work at the facility.

"There is even some fourth-generation family here for their summer employment," Crider asserted.

The park is known for its friendly and affordable environment and – oh yes – "America's Best Amusement Park Food," according to the property's website.

### Park takes a hike

**Pat Thomson**, owner of **Western Playland Amusement Park**, Sunland Park,

N.M., knows what it means to take a hike.

His amusement park was located less than 20 miles east of its current New Mexico location in El Paso County, Texas, several years ago when a dispute arose during Thomson's attempts to add a new ride at the property.

As the park owner puts it: "I wouldn't pay 'bribes' and moved the park to New Mexico."

In essence, Thomson told the politicians to take a hike, packed up all of his gear and found a new home for Western Playland.

The park has been family-owned for 53 years and now occupies 30 acres with 24 rides. A highlight is a sky ride over the center of the property along with three roller coasters and favorites such as the Paratrooper, Round-Up (Frank Hrubetz Co.), Scrambler (Eli Bridge Co.) and Hampton Umbrella Rides.

### An Enchanted Forest and Santa's Village

Theme parks are nothing new when it comes to family-owned businesses within the industry.



Four generations have worked at **Quassy Amusement Park**, including from left: **Nick DeMatteis**, **John Frantzis**, **George Frantzis II**, **George Frantzis III**, **Eric Anderson**, **Sam Anderson** and **Chris Anderson**.

COURTESY QUASSY



Although the **Wonderland Park** family is ever-growing in size, only four are active daily in the Texas park. **Rebecca Parker** (far left, back row) and (seated on bench beginning second from left) **Paula Borchardt**, **Aletha Roads** and **Paul Borchardt**. AT FILE

**Susan Vaslev**, owner and chief operations officer at **Enchanted Forest** in Turner, Ore., has been involved at her family park for years.

"I remember one night before opening for the season, painting the entry castle spires with my father with a spotlight on the work and the stars in the sky," she recalled. "I still remember that fun of working late to make things beautiful."

The 25-acre property has been in the family for 50 years and features storybook characters and attractions along with nine rides.

The handcrafted attractions are situated in the breathtaking Oregon forest with a giant witch's head castle a point of interest for most guests.

"You walk through the mouth and slide out the hair," Vaslev said of the attraction's unique features.

A log flume and variety of children's rides round out the visit.

Santa Claus must feel right at home in New Hampshire any time of the year as **Santa's Village** in Jefferson has been operating since 1953.

The 15-acre park claims to

be "the summer home of Santa and his reindeer." Who would argue?

Though the park sports 18 rides and a waterpark, it thrives because of its two theaters and the jolly fat man who greets guests daily.

Five family members are involved in the operation, according to Santa's helper **Jim Miller**.

Of course, the rides are with family in mind and pretty much decked out for the holiday season. You'll see a Merry Christmas Ferris Wheel (Eli Bridge Co.), mini Himalaya (Venture Rides), family swinger, coaster and tea cups among the attractions.

### What it's all about

Our questionnaire asked park owners and managers what they thought was the best thing about the business.

There were some variations written down, but it could pretty much be summed up this way: "Seeing the families enjoying each other, their smiles and knowing we've created life-long memories" said **Nancy DiGiammarco**, director of marketing, **Silverwood Theme Park**, Athol, Idaho.





## NEW JERSEY AMUSEMENT ASSOCIATION

### SUPERSTORM SANDY

## Restore, Rebuild and Reopen

A message from NJAA Executive Director Kimberle Samarelli

### 'Learning about myself, and this industry, from Superstorm Sandy'

As I sit and reflect on the past 12 months, the impact from the events we experienced still seems surreal. In a short period of time, we in the New Jersey / New York area witnessed an unprecedented amount of destruction and devastation.

It felt like we were in an endless battle: Round One sucker-punched us with **Superstorm Sandy**; Round Two battered us with a **Nor'easter** that ushered more water into our already flooded communities; and Round Three blindsided us with a raging **boardwalk fire** in Seaside Park, N.J.

I know Mother Nature is a powerful force, but so is Human Nature. After per-

sonally being affected by all of those events, my spirit became even stronger and more committed on many levels. I learned that when tragedy strikes, there's no time to think. You just react and spring into action.

I met and worked with some of the MOST amazing people during those difficult times — people who reacted and reached out to one another despite being strangers just hours before. Today, they're no longer strangers. Now they're true friends who offer a shoulder if you need to shed a tear, or take a call when you need to vent. These are valuable and lasting friendships created during a journey none of us in-



Kimberle Samarelli

tended, but all of us shared.

I learned about flexibility and how to think quickly on my feet from this industry. As we all know, not one day in the amusement business is ever the same, and I never

thought that growing up in the industry would teach me the life skills to think fast, be concise and react quickly to a situation. I hate to say I'm a pro at it, but I have mulled through more paperwork, insurance policies and situations in the last year than I care to think about.

It hasn't been easy, but when you have the support of this industry and you're surrounded by colleagues and friends, it doesn't feel as difficult or hopeless.

I think we're all heroes in our own way, but I also believe our industry, as a whole, is the real HERO. Together we took the hit. Together we rebuilt. Together we celebrate the future.

The physician and author **Martin H. Fisher** said, "Life is a ticket to the greatest show on earth." This is so true, but it's also true that experiencing this greatest show TOGETHER makes the ticket worth even more.

I want to personally thank **Gary Slade** and all the staff at **Amusement Today** for their commitment and resilience. I also wish to express my gratitude for their wonderful newspaper and for all they have done for the **New Jersey Amusement Association** and its members. Their experience and professionalism is extraordinary.

Kimberle Samarelli can be reached via [njaa40plus@aol.com](mailto:njaa40plus@aol.com).

### CASINO PIER PHOTO ALBUM

COURTESY DEBBIE KARU/CASINO PIER



Casino Pier in Seaside Heights, N.J. (above), as seen at night near the end of the 2013 summer season following its partial rebuilding and reopening. The pier's Musik Express ride (top right) is shown before and after Superstorm Sandy, as is the Star Jet roller coaster (bottom right). The latter's watery grave fate made it a media icon.



## CONTINUING COVERAGE | SUPERSTORM SANDY

## FunTown Pier owner given cleanup contract

## Seaside Park pushes forward with post-fire boardwalk demolition

**STORY:** Dean Lamanna  
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

SEASIDE PARK, N.J. — Within a month of a huge accidental blaze that destroyed the Superstorm Sandy-ravaged remains of FunTown Pier and several boardwalk blocks straddling the border of Seaside Park and Seaside Heights, demolition of the badly damaged pier and charred, collapsed buildings got underway in early October.

The neighboring Jersey Shore communities, eager to begin the cleanup in order to get a jump on reconstruction and readiness for the 2014 summer season, hired a local contractor at a cost of approximately \$4.7 million to do the work.

According to online listings, the contractor, Eagle Paving Corp. of Toms River, is operated by William Major, who also owns FunTown Pier. In a report by the *Asbury Park Press*, Seaside Park Borough Administrator Bob Martucci said that the state permitted his community and Seaside Heights to skip a closed bidding process for the work be-

cause it was an “emergency” situation with possible negative impacts on public health and safety.

Several other estimates submitted for the massive job, which will clear the totally lost or damaged portions of more than 50 businesses and is expected to take two months to finish, reportedly were less than Eagle Paving’s but were deemed not credible for the thorough completion of the work.

Seaside Park and Seaside Heights each are receiving \$2.5 million from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority to assist with the cleanup.

Meanwhile, despite taking devastating hits by wind, water and fire in less than 12 months, FunTown Pier’s Bill Major has said that his ocean-front amusement park will be back as a local economic driver along with the competing Casino Pier, about a half mile north in Seaside Heights. This latter operation partially reopened for the 2013 season.

Major reportedly has met twice with the New Jersey Department of Environmental



Protection about seeking permission to extend FunTown Pier into the Atlantic 300 feet. Whether he will be able to rebuild and reopen the property by next summer remains to be seen.

Still, in an interview that appeared in *The Star-Ledger* of Newark, Major seemed enthusiastic about his plans for what he envisions as a brand-new, nearly eight-acre pier. He reportedly has a Florida-based park architect working on a new design and had planned to attend the annual International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions convention in Orlando in November.

In light of the 83-year-old FunTown Pier’s status as Seaside Park’s top taxpayer prior to the hurricane, it behooves the borough to be as supportive of Major’s efforts as possible.

“The pier has been a good neighbor,” said Mayor Robert Matthies in an interview with Bloomberg.com earlier this year. “Rebuilding the pier is vital to the economic balance sheet of the borough.”

FunTown Pier had 33 rides prior to Superstorm Sandy, while Casino Pier had 36. Their respective homes of Seaside Park and Seaside Heights annually attract more than a million visitors combined.

An aerial view of the FunTown Pier site (above) about a month after the Sept. 12 boardwalk blaze shows the storm and fire debris-clearing progress and the last of the park’s surviving rides, which also were to be removed. The fire left a tangle of charred, rusted boardwalk and business wreckage (below) adjacent to FunTown Pier, where workers have been gathering and removing piles of that structure’s wood and concrete remains (bottom).

AERIAL COURTESY BOB ALBERDING;  
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### Negative coverage, perceptions impacted Jersey Shore tourism

SEASIDE HEIGHTS, N.J.— Discouraged by sensational media images and unable to distinguish between Jersey Shore resorts that had suffered major hurricane damage and those that had not, many Garden State residents did not bother seeking fun along the coast last summer, a Monmouth University-*Asbury Park Press* poll found.

The results of the survey, conducted statewide via phone in early September, bore out fears expressed to AT over the past year by the New Jersey Amusement Association (NJAA) and many amusement operators and tourism agencies from Keansburg and Seaside Heights south to Atlantic City and The Wildwoods.

Of the 783 adults interviewed, almost 40 percent spent less time at their favorite beach towns — about half believing that businesses were either curtailed or shut down due to Superstorm Sandy in late October of last year.

Periods of inclement weather also figured into the decision of some to visit the coast less frequently.

The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

According to NJAA, shore tourism represents the foundation of the state’s \$38 billion leisure and hospitality industry and is its third-largest source of private sector jobs. Including jobs on the periphery of tourism, the industry drives nearly 10 percent of the state’s total employment.

“The numbers speak volumes about the importance of our effort to rebuild,” said NJAA Executive Director Kimberle Samarelli. “The amusement industry is generational, both the customers and the operators. We can’t afford to lose that.”

—Dean Lamanna



## 2013 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS — SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK

## 2013 Golden Ticket Awards cap a fantastic weekend



Santa Cruz, California Mayor Hilary Bryant presents a Mayor's Proclamation to Amusement Today Publisher Gary Slade proclaiming Sept. 6-8, 2013 as "Golden Ticket Awards Weekend" in the City of Santa Cruz.  
AT/DAN FEICHT

**STORY:** Tim Baldwin  
tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — Seeing growth each year, **Amusement Today's** annual **Golden Ticket Awards** ceremony continues to draw industry professionals from around the country — and beyond — to what many park insiders consider to be one of the most entertaining and enjoyable networking opportunities in the amusement industry. The 2013 celebration of the "Best of the Best" was certainly no exception. Surpassing the 200 registered attendees milestone, the Golden Ticket Awards headed back to California for the first time since 2008.

Neighboring the **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**, the Dream Inn resort hotel was abuzz with arriving guests on Friday, September 6. Boardwalk staff were on hand to welcome each attendee, complete with a jam packed gift bag containing a sweatshirt, DVD and various goodies from the award-winning park.

Those arriving early enough could enjoy a behind-the-scenes tour while the park



Above, winners in 29 categories took home the coveted 2013 Golden Tickets after results were announced live from Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk on Sept. 7. The Santa Cruz, Calif. family-owned and operated park was host to the two-day event that saw more than 200 industry professionals attend. Below, Amusement Today graciously thanks the many presenters, including our first timers, who gave their time to make the ceremony a huge success and the best event yet. AT/DAN FEICHT



was not in operation Friday afternoon. For its size, the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk had no problem impressing visitors with its cutting edge technology in terms of security, finance and operations. The employee facilities were modern and engaging. A sense of pride was

clearly evident. **Todd Manoff**, maintenance manager, even brought out a special item from his own collection, a vintage classic auto dating back more than 100 years. He has lovingly restored and preserved the beautiful antique and was pleased to share it with Golden

Ticket visitors.

Things really kicked off with an opening reception that afternoon. The park staff opened a stretch of the boardwalk complete with numerous appetizers, beverages of all kinds and a handful of signature rides that included its 100-year old **Looff**

**Carousel**, the recently revitalized Haunted Castle with its **R&R/Sally/I.E. Park** revamp, and the ever-so-classic 1924 **Giant Dipper** wooden roller coaster.

Shortly, attendees moved to the far end of the Board-

► See GTA, page 75



*Thank You*  
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2013 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS  
EVENT!





## 2013 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS — SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK

### College students find the spotlight at the 2013 Golden Ticket Awards

**STORY:** Janice Witherow  
jwitherow@amusementtoday.com

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — A group of college students who plan to pursue a career in the amusement industry found themselves on stage and assisting at the **2013 Golden Ticket Awards**. For the ninth year, **Amusement Today** honored several outstanding students who are employed by this year's host park of **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** and neighboring parks **California's Great America** in Santa Clara, Calif., and **Gilroy Gardens** in Gilroy, Calif., as **Ms. and Mr. Golden Tickets**.

These four individuals exemplify the spirit and integrity of the amusement park industry by promoting the cornerstones of safety, service, courtesy and cleanliness at the highest level,

while consistently exceeding job expectations. This is an annual designation by *Amusement Today* to promote education in the field of hospitality and amusement, as well as to recognize future leaders in the amusement industry.

The 2013 class of Ms. and Mr. Golden Tickets assisted with the ceremony by presenting awards to the winning parks; plus each received a complimentary one-year subscription to *Amusement Today*, and an Office Depot gift card for school and career supplies. *Amusement Today* applauds the following students:

•**Rubi Orozco** of **California's Great America**, who has worked at the park for six seasons most recently in the Ride Operations Department. Rubi is attending Las Positas College in Livermore, Calif., and is majoring in Business



During its annual awards ceremony *Amusement Today* presented the 2013 class of Ms. and Mr. Golden Tickets. They are, from left to right: **Carlos Rubalcaba**, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk; **Shannon Swanson**, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk; **Rubi Orozco**, California's Great America and **Michael Fulcher**, Gilroy Gardens. AT/DAN FEICHT

Management.

•**Michael Fulcher** of **Gilroy Gardens**. Michael has

worked with the company for six years and currently works in the Ride Operations De-

partment. He is attending the University of California Santa Cruz, where he is studying Physics.

•**Shannon Swanson** of the **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**. Shannon has worked at the Boardwalk for two seasons and currently is employed in the Operations Department. She is a student at Cabrillo College in Aptos, Calif., where she is majoring in Business.

•**Carlos Rubalcaba** of the **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk**. Carlos has worked at the park for two years and is currently employed in the Rides Department; plus sometimes serves as the Boardwalk's costume character, Splash the Pelican. He is attending Cabrillo College in Aptos, Calif., where he is studying music.



Showing off their pro bowlers form during the Boardwalk Bowl event were top row from left: SCBB's Charles Canfield and WhiteWater/Hopkins Rides' Jim Glover, reported as the highest bowler of the night! Below from left, Dick Chance, Chance Rides relives his youth while Herschend's Gina Claassen was the reported top female bowler! AT thanks all who participated in this fun (and crazy) event! AT/DAN FEICHT



### ►GTA

Continued from page 74

walk to the park's Aloha Terrace where dinner with a luau flare pleased the crowd. Coconut shrimp with orange sauce, marinated chicken, BBQ ribs, fresh fruit and many sides were in abundance — all wonderfully done. Not to be outdone, the dessert spread was decadent and satisfied every sweet tooth and then some. Chocolate dipped specialties, caramel apples, and more — even **Dippin' Dots**. All of this was accented by a live band called Island Breeze. *Amusement Today* Publisher **Gary Slade**, Boardwalk President **Charles Canfield**, and **Tom Canfield**, vice president Boardwalk Operations, welcomed everyone officially to the weekend activities. It was the mayor of Santa Cruz that really kicked it up a notch. **Mayor Hilary Bryant** officially declared the weekend Golden Ticket Weekend in Santa Cruz and brought an official decree. **Wolfgang Brost** from **Maurer Söhne**, one of the evening's sponsors, briefly discussed his company's roller coaster installation at the Boardwalk.

One of the biggest surprises of the weekend was Friday night's special activity — bowling! Across the street at **Boardwalk Bowl**, the Golden Ticket Awards attendees took over the lanes for an uproarious



night of camaraderie. No one was shy. Several guests commented on how incorporating the activity was a tremendous idea and added to the social aspect of the weekend. **Carole Sanderson** of the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives** spearheaded fundraising efforts for the evening, with profits going to further the organization's goals of documenting the industry's history.

"The bowling was a real highlight," commented **John Arie Jr.** of **Fun Spot America**. "It was unbelievable. We had a great time. We got to play with industry friends. The whole night was awesome. Everybody was smiling; it was really different. I want to do it every year."

Saturday, September 7, offered attendees a little freedom to enjoy the area and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk in full-blown operation. Tremendous weather brought in a nice crowd, but the Boardwalk's efficient and extremely friendly staff managed them well. Wanting to keep their Golden Ticket guests fed, the Boardwalk had provided vouchers for out-of-towners to sample the various foods along the property. For a facility of its size, the quality

and variety of food one can find on the Boardwalk rivals parks twice its size. (If you are a garlic fan, the garlic fries are loaded.)

Those that did not have an opportunity to tour behind-the-scenes the day prior could once again do so on Saturday. Many made a point to enjoy the park's distinctive and one-of-a-kind **Cave Train** that travels below the Boardwalk. Blue skies and sunshine made for ideal photo opportunities. It was quite the perfect afternoon.

**Terry Adams**, COO for **Schlitterbahn Waterparks**, is no stranger to the Golden Tickets. As a multiple winner and even a host many years ago, she had been to several ceremonies before, but she was visibly taken by the Boardwalk. "I think this is an amazing park," says Adams. "What a real treat. This was certainly worth the trip to the West Coast. What an amazing, unique, unusual, quaint, highly technical and professional park — all at the same time."

Noted on the front of the Coconut Grove Ballroom was the nighttime ceremony of the Golden Ticket Awards. Come evening, attendees gussied up after a day of outdoor recreation and enjoyed a red carpet treatment prior to the ceremony. Live music complemented the mingling around appetizer stations in the Bay View Room,

► See GTA, page 76



## 2013 GOLDEN TICKET AWARDS — SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK

## ►GTA

Continued from page 75 outside of the ballroom. With seaside vistas and the grand ambience in place, the stage was set for a wonderful evening.

**Jump City**, an energetic percussion troupe by **Mirage Entertainment**, led attendees into the ballroom once the curtain doors were opened. Candle lit tables filled the Coconut Grove and soon dinner was underway. Suggested by Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, the 2013 ceremony didn't take place before or after dinner, but during the catered affair, bringing a Golden Globes feel to the night. **Charles Canfield** welcomed the crowd once again and soon various industry professionals were presenting the many categories of awards.

The evening's festivities had its certain talking points. One set of presenters, Santa and "Cruise," with **Gravity Group's Michael Graham** as Santa Claus and **Ride Entertainment Group's Adam Sandy** as Tom Cruise, brought in some early laughs, and the folks at Holiday World were quick to bring in the zinger callbacks toward Santa when accepting their awards.

The deliciously notorious duo of **Pamela Landwirth** of **Give Kids the World** and **Zamperla's Ramon Rosario** were back in true form with their sassy banter, this time with Rosario belting out some musical vocals at the end of his time at the podium.

The first-ever tie for a category win delivered a mock systems shutdown and blackout to the ballroom. When "authorization" was given and the Golden Tickets restored, **Dollywood's Pete Owens** and **Dick Knoebel** of **Knoebels Amusement Resort** played it up by accepting their awards in matching apparel.

**Brad Thomas**, general manager of **Silver Dollar City**, graciously brought up **Fred Grubb** of **Rocky Mountain Construction** to share in the honor of accepting the award for Best New Ride. The park's sensational new **Outlaw Run**, provided by RMC, took the Golden Ticket win and the two gentlemen praised each other in their partnership of this innovative new attraction.

A wide range of emotions is not uncommon with the ceremony, however. The In Memoriam segment always causes the industry to pause



Above, the 2013 Publisher's Pick winners as announced by AT Publisher Gary Slade were, left to right: **Ronald Bussink**, **Bussink Design GmbH**; **John Arie Sr.**, **Fun Spot America**; **Kim Samarelli**, **New Jersey Amusement Association** and **Raffi Kaprelyan**, **Knott's Berry Farm**. Below, **Mirage Entertainment's Jump City** performs at the Golden Ticket ceremony. AT/DAN FEICHT



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and reflect on those who we have lost and dearly miss. Clearly moved was **Kimberle Samarelli**, executive director of the **New Jersey Amusement Association**. As one of the recipient's of Slade's Publishers Pick's, Samarelli graciously accepted her award recognizing her efforts in helping restore the Jersey Shore following Hurricane Sandy. In a twisted taunt of cruel irony, Samarelli's happy moment was challenged mere days later when her return to the Jersey Shore would see a destructive fire consume Seaside Heights. Other Publisher's Picks recipients **John Aire Sr.** [**Fun Spot America**] and **Ronald Bussink** [**Bussink Design**] accepted their awards with gracious dignity. **Raffi Kaprelyan**, vice president and general manager of **Knott's Berry Farm**, accepted the Turnstile Award and re-emphasized the commitment to keep and maintain historically significant rides within the park, even though age and maintenance require re-investment. It is this dedication to keeping long-beloved, popular attractions around for future generations that led Slade to his decision. **Jeff Pike** of **Great Coasters International, Inc.**, typically known for his wacky stunts with fellow GCII



colleague **Chris Gray**, took a more touching direction this year, recounting his special link to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk by sharing how he became engaged at the **Skee Ball** alley with a two-ticket prize ring, got married on the beach, and had his wedding reception in the very ballroom in which the awards were taking place. Pike knew from a sentimental standpoint that it was an absolute must for his wife to accompany him this time.

Near the end, **Rick Schuiteman**, vice president of **Sea World San Diego**, who could have won an award for Most Electric Personality when his mere touch frazzled the sound system earlier in the show, invited everyone back to California next year, this time at the southern end for the **2014 Golden Ticket Awards September 5-7, 2014**. It will be Sea World's 50th anniversary.

Both those presenting awards and accepting them did so with style and grace. Following the ceremony, pictures were in order, and everyone was free to enjoy a dessert buffet and more cocktails to wind down what everyone believed to be an incredible evening.

At the end of the night, the **Boardwalk's Marq Lipton**,

vice president, Marketing and Sales, was all smiles. "What a weekend! We were so pleased to be able to host the Golden Ticket Awards right here at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. It was a fun weekend; it was a fun time — speaking with so many people in the industry, watching people enjoying themselves, and recognizing the Best of the Best in 2013."

**Mark Rosenzweig** of **Ride Entertainment Group** gushed, "What's not to love about Santa Cruz and the Golden Tickets? It's an opportunity for the amusement industry to gather; operators and suppliers can enjoy one of the great classic American amusement parks in this spectacular setting of Monterey Bay." He adds, "The Loeff Carousel, the classic Giant Dipper, great food, great atmosphere — it's the total package."

Those fortunate enough to attend the next day had an invitation from nearby **California's Great America** to enjoy a complementary day at the park, complete with a goodie bag on arrival. A lovely luncheon was arranged in what was called The Arbor, a vine-shaded canopy alongside the midway. Numerous food items and creative beverages satisfied everyone,

and a chocolate fountain allowed for some fun dipping of desserts. **Raul Rehnborg**, vice president and general manager of California's **Great America**, welcomed everyone and invited attendees to take park tours specially arranged for Golden Ticket guests.

Many took advantage of the Fast Lane wristbands and were sure to catch a ride on the park's new **Gold Striker**, a product of **Great Coasters International, Inc.** The rambunctious new twister encircles the park's iconic **Star Tower** and delivers a comfortable ride mixed with speed and airtime.

With two great parks opening their doors, it is no surprise attendees left extremely satisfied. **Winter Prosapio**, corporate director of communications for **Schlitterbahn Waterparks** attended the weekend as a first timer. "It's been amazing. I've been to many industry awards shows in a lot of different industries. This has been by far the best industry awards program I've ever been to. The time in Santa Cruz, the Boardwalk time, the opportunity to meet so many great people — it has been an incredible experience. Count on me for next year."

As in previous years, helping to support the GTA's, both **AIMS International** and the **National Roller Coaster Museum and Archives** board of directors each held their annual board meetings prior to the start of the GTA event.

**Amusement Today** graciously thanks both host parks, **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** and **California's Great America**. The hospitality was magnificent and industry attendees were sure to leave with outstanding memories of networking opportunities, see firsthand new ideas, and having the chance to meet new faces.





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# MIDWAY

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## Rebranded Washington State Fair has a great 2013

*New steel coaster debuts; classic wooden coaster rides like new after five-year rehab*

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

PUYALLUP, Wash. — Although officials at the Washington State Fair have decided this year not to release attendance figures, officials did deem this year a success.

This was the first year of the rebranding of this fair with the new name, Washington State Fair. It ran Sept. 6-22.

"We aren't supplying the exact attendance any longer," said fair spokesperson Karen LaFlamme. "However, it was over one million for the first-ever Washington State Fair. We did experience some challenging rain on important weekend days. While people are used to rain in this part of the country, it can impact attendance."

Not only did the fair don

a new name and a long list of rides provided by Funtastic Traveling Shows, it also debuted a new inversion coaster, named the Rainier Rush through a local naming contest, and a renovated existing wooden coaster, the Classic Coaster, both owned by the fair.

"Both the Classic Coaster and Rainier Rush drew lots of fans," LaFlamme said. "The Classic Coaster, which finished a five-year renovation right before opening day, was presented with a plaque from American Coaster Enthusiasts, proclaiming it a Roller Coaster Landmark."

"Nearly 35,000 thrill seekers loved the Rainier Rush, a diagonal loop coaster," she said.

The new coaster, made by Italian manufacturer Top Fun, is about 62 feet high and reaches a maximum speed of 50 mph. Its maximum G-force

► See FAIR, page 81



The Washington State Fair, Puyallup, Sept. 6-22, was deemed a success this year by fair officials. This was the first year of the fair's new name and of a new policy to no longer release attendance figures. However, officials stated the fair drew over one million even with some challenging weather this year. Funtastic Traveling Shows provides the midway for the fair. AT/DAN FEICHT



The new looping inversion coaster, which debuted at this year's Washington State Fair, Puyallup, Sept. 6-22, was a huge hit. The coaster, named Rainier Rush through a naming contest, was built by Italian manufacturer Top Fun. It is about 62 feet high and reaches a maximum speed of 50 mph. It was originally installed at Santa's Village Amusement Park, Dundee, Ill., in 1998. In 2011, it was sold to the L.A. County Fair, Pomona, Calif., and then sold again to the Washington State Fair, which spent about \$1 million on the coaster. AT/DAN FEICHT



Funtastic Traveling Shows provides the midway for the Washington State Fair, Puyallup, which ran Sept. 6-22, this year. One of the popular rides on the midway is this ARM Vertigo. AT/DAN FEICHT

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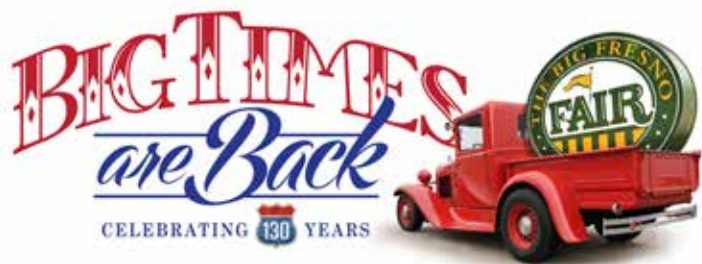


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# Big Fresno Fair setting records, numbers not seen since 1992



## Big Fresno Fair by the numbers

- **7,639,449** people were reached through social media (Facebook & Twitter) during the 13 days of the 2013 Big Fresno Fair
- **26,144** likes on Facebook
- **2,148** animals were exhibited at the Fresno Fair
- **\$643,258** was generated from two Livestock Auctions, most expensive animal sold for \$6,720 at \$24 per pound
- **1,360** hours of free entertainment were provided
- **6,000** pounds of tri-tip, **2,800** smoked turkey legs, and **4,000** ears of corn
- West Coast Concessions sold about **10,000** Churros
- New food vendor Southern Comfort Kitchen sold **3,500** Fried Gator Bite on a stick, **250** pounds of shrimp, and **800** pounds of rice on a stick
- New food vendor Sharky's sold **1,600** lobster corndogs, **600** shark bites, and **5,000** pounds of fries
- Garlicky's sold **4,500** Garlic Chicken Kabobs and **1,500** pizzas
- Country Fair Cinnamon Rolls used more than **16** tons of flour, more than **7** tons of cinnamon sugar, over **6,000** pounds of butter and more than **5,000** pounds of cream cheese
- Dippin Dots sold **75** gallons of Dippin Dots, with the two most popular flavors being Banana Split and Cookies & Cream

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne  
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

FRESNO, Calif. — The 130th Big Fresno (Calif.) Fair, Oct. 2-14, packed in fairgoers this year bringing in 641,351 people over the 13 days. Fair officials said attendance hasn't gone over the 600,000 mark since 1992 when the fair ran for 17 days.

This year's total attendance represents an 11.06 percent increase over 2012 and the fair's concessions reported an increase of 13.25 over last year.

Officials are calling it "the best fair in decades."

"I could not be more pleased with results of this fair," said John C. Alkire, fair CEO. "Our team worked incredibly hard to put on the best Big Fresno Fair possible from attractions and entertainment to discounts to community service programs to exceptional customer service. All of that paid off and the community turned out in crowds to support us. We thank them for unwavering support."

New attractions also boosted spirits. Among the most popular were the Reptile House, the Discover Dinosaur Exhibit and the Sea Lion Splash.

Butler Amusements provided the midway with more than 50 rides including two new

rides for the fair, the Ex-Scream Rollercoaster, manufactured by Pinfari, and ARM's 100-foot-tall Vertigo.

Butler also brought in tried and true favorites such as: Chance's Zipper; Ring of Fire by Larson International; Dizzy Dragon by Sellner/Larson International; Wisdom's Viper, Tornado and Raiders; Eagle 16 wheel by Eli Bridge; Zamperla's Lolli Swing and Rock N Tub; Chopper Hopper by Fabbri; Spin Out by Tivoli; Quad Runner by Dalton Kid Rides; and the Mardi Gras by Owen Trailers.

The fair boasted four sellouts this year in the live entertainment category, with Ramon Ayala, Gabriel Iglesias, Korn, and Darius Rucker all packing the house. Other headline entertainment also sold very well.

The upward trend also applied to events like wagering on live horse racing at the fair, officials added, despite lagging racing numbers statewide due to smaller herd sizes and an increased challenge in getting horses on the fair racing circuit. The Big Fresno Fair nine-day live horseracing meet was up two percent for both On-Track and Northern California Wagering and up six percent for Out of State Wagering.

The fair, along with Butler Amusements, offered many and varied discounts and promotions to help patrons feel they could better afford the entertainment despite a sagging economy.



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Butler Amusements provided the midway with more than 50 rides this year at the Big Fresno Fair. One of the new rides from the carnival company was the Ex-Scream Rollercoaster, manufactured by Pinfari. COURTESY BIG FRESNO FAIR



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## ►FAIR

Continued from page 79

is plus-5.8, comparable to the force felt in a Formula One racecar during heavy braking, according to a fair news release. It seats 36 riders and runs two trains simultaneously.

One of the most notable features of the new ride is an inclined loop, tilted at about an 80-degree angle.

The fair's wooden coaster was built in 1935. It has cost about \$250,000 over the last five years to restore, LaFlamme had said last spring. The coaster continued to run during the annual 17-day fair even while renovations were going on. Sections of deteriorated wood were replaced during the off-season months.

John Hinde, J.P. Hinde Enterprises, a ride consulting company, supervised the renovation project of the Classic Coaster. Fair officials maintained the original design of the coaster. Hinde said all materials that were replaced in the coaster were sturdier than the original timbers.

Fair officials brought in

the Puyallup police to test the coaster's speed. It clocked about 34 mph.

Besides the two coasters, other rides brought in by Funtastic Traveling shows included on the Midway: Cliff Hanger manufactured by Darton; Inverter by Chance; Bertazzon's Matterhorn; Chance's Sea Dragon; ARM's Vertigo; Eli Bridge's Scrambler and Fabbri's Kamikaze. In Sillyville rides included: Dragon Wagon by Wisdom; Zamperla's Lolli Swing; Dalton's Quad Racer and Wisdom's Raiders.

There were 73 rides total this year, according to LaFlamme. Funtastic Shows has been the midway provider at the Puyallup fair for about 30 years.

New food concessions this year included the Bavarian Beer Garden, Famous Ezell's Chicken, International Village Rooftop Bar, Juicy's Outlaw Grill, Sillyville Soda Shop, Sharkey's Seafood, Steel Creek American Whiskey Company, and Vrieze's Fleischkuehle.

The fair features headline entertainment, rodeo, grounds entertainment and both animal and commercial exhibits.



The Classic Coaster at the Washington State Fair, Puyallup, had just undergone a five-year renovation when the fair opened Sept. 6. It cost the fair about \$250,000 to restore the wooden coaster that was originally built in 1935. The rehab project was overseen by John Hinde, J.P. Hinde Enterprises. AT/DAN FEICHT



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## MIDWAYLIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne, psherborne@amusementtoday.com

Forty percent more people attended the **State Fair of Virginia**, Doswell, this year.

**Virginia Farm Bureau Federation** spokesman **Greg Hicks** said the 10-day fair attracted 229,000 people, up from 160,000 a year ago. The fair ran from Sept. 27-Oct. 6.

According to the *Free Lance-Star*, Hicks attributed the increase to better promotion, word-of-mouth and good weather. It didn't rain the entire time.

This is the first year that the fair was run completely by the Farm Bureau Federation.

**Deggeller Attractions** provided the midway with about 50 rides, including Chance's Zipper, Starship 4000 by Wisdom, Tornado by Wisdom, Quad Runner by Dartron, Vertigo by ARM, Viper, and the Pirate and Super Nova both by Huss.

The **Mississippi State Fair**, Jackson, Oct. 2-13, had another year of record attendance this year.

The 2013 event sold just below 700,000 tickets, 40,000 more than last year, fair officials said.

The big jump in attendance numbers was thanks to a huge final weekend. A fair official said Sunday, Oct. 13, was the biggest day on record, with more than 120,000 tickets sold.

**North American Midway Entertainment** provides the midway.

After attending the **2013 Allen County Fair**, Lima, Ohio, a group of executives decided they wanted to help make the fairgrounds better.

That group, a part of **PotashCorp**, an integrated producer of fertilizer with offices in Northbrook, Ill., and Saskatoon, Sask., decided to donate \$300,000 to fix four connecting commercial activities buildings at the northeast end of the fairgrounds. The buildings are used nearly every weekend for various events from shows during the fair to the monthly Tri-State Gun Collectors gun show.

**Todd Sutton**, general manager at PotashCorp and a 4-H program fan, made the announcement to a group last month.

During the announcement, Fair Manager **David Grimm** showed artist renderings of what the buildings could look like inside and out including nice landscaping surrounding the buildings.

The work is scheduled to be completed by the time the fair opens in August 2014, according to Grimm.

Besides the annual Allen County Fair, the fairgrounds hosts numerous events such as gun shows, the 4x4 Off Road 4 Wheel Jamboree Monster Truck Show, the Bud Light PBR Lima Invitational bull riding, the Ohio National Championship Motorcycle Races and Max's Water Dog Races Swap Meet & Flea Market.

Sutton had said he didn't make the trip to the fair with intentions of making a donation, but the group felt the fair needed it and they were pleased to be able to give it.

The Allen County Fair was held Aug. 16-24 this year. **Poor Jack's Amusements** has provided the midway for 34 years.

Attendance at this year's **Hancock County Fair**, Findlay, Ohio, Aug. 28-Sept. 2, totaled 109,800. Ticket Chairman **Aaron Smith** reported to a local news agency that this total was a big increase from last year's rain-dampened 2012 turnout of 87,000.

Smith gave these attendance estimates for the six-day fair: Wednesday, 16,500; Thursday, 13,000;

Friday, 15,800; Saturday, 19,500; Sunday, 29,000; and Monday, 16,000.

There were no major weather problems this year.

"All our major acts were pretty well-attended," Smith was quoted as saying, including the tractor and truck pulls, the demolition derby, the Saturday night rodeo, and Monday's Junior Fair livestock auction.

Last year, rainy weather caused the cancellation of both the tractor pulls and the cheerleading competition.

**Burton Brothers Amusements** provided the midway.

The **Michigan State Fair** has grown and succeeded over the last two years since it's been in Novi, Mich. And, for that, its organizers want to give back to the community that supports it.

A donation of \$8,000 was presented by **Blair Bowman**, owner of the Suburban Collection Showplace, home to the State Fair, to the City of Novi at its meeting Sept. 2.

"The event was a huge success in every respect," Bowman said of this year's fair, which was the second in its new home of Novi after then-Gov. **Jennifer Granholm** pulled funding in 2009. It was called the **Great Lakes State Fair** last year and renamed the **Fifth Third Bank Michigan State Fair** for 2013. The fair ran Aug. 30-Sept. 2.

In 2012, attendance hit 50,000. This year that grew to 80,000 over Labor Day weekend, with 150 volunteers making it happen. Bowman said the ultimate goal is to make it the best family event in the state.

He described the fair as a charitable, community effort. More than one-third of the ticket proceeds are going to fair supporter Detroit Shriners' efforts to help children hospital needs.

In addition, \$10,000 each was given to support 4H Club and urban youth scholarship programs. Another \$4,000 was put back into Novi service groups like the Rotary Club.

This year's donation will be primarily devoted to the Novi Public Library, the Police/Fire Benevolent Association and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services.

**Arnold Amusements Inc.** provided the midway at this year's fair.

CentralTrack.com, a Dallas, Texas, focused publication reported in a recent publication that although the story of the **State Fair of Texas' Big Tex** burning at the 2012 fair kept the fair in a semi-spotlight for the entire year, one story that didn't really get recognized was the fact the fair almost lost the 212-foot-high **Texas Star** wheel, which has been a permanent fixture on the midway.

The news agency reported when the contract that allows the private owners, **Barbara Brown** and her brother, **Mike Sandefur**, of the iconic wheel to operate the ride during the fair's 24-day run came up for renewal after last year's fair, weren't sure they had the time or energy to continue operating the wheel.

So, the Texas Star was put onto the market. And, according to the CentralTrack.com report, at least one of the potential parties interested in buying the wheel hoped to relocate it away from the fairgrounds.

As it turned out, an offer was made for the purchase, but as soon as **Mary Talley**, Barbara Brown's

daughter and owner with her husband of **Talley's Amusements**, found out what that offer was, Talley matched it and that was that. Talley's father and Barbara Brown's husband, Buster Brown, originally built the wheel in 1985.

Talley didn't disclose the cost she paid. She has secured a long-term contract with the State Fair of Texas.

An amusement ride company official says routine maintenance could have prevented a Connecticut fair accident that sent 13 people to hospitals with minor injuries.

The mishap occurred Sept. 8 on the **Zumur** swing ride at **Norwalk's Oyster Festival**, Hartford, Conn. A drive system that spins the ride's hanging swings froze, sending riders hurtling into each other and the ride itself.

**Jeff Roth** is vice president of administration at **Chance Rides Inc.** of Wichita, Kan., whose predecessor company made the Zumur ride. He said Thursday that a drive shaft broke because gears weren't readjusted under manufacturer specifications.

Chance Rides is reminding other Zumur owners to check the gears.

Ride owner **Stewart Amusement Co.** of Monroe, Conn., says crews did maintain the ride to manufacturer specifications.

**Pat Conklin**, chief executive officer, **Sonoma-Marin Fair**, Santa Rosa, Calif., is stepping down to work full time for the **Dixon May Fair** in her hometown of Dixon, Calif.

For the past year, Conklin has been running both fairs, and she said the move would allow her to be closer to family.

"It's time for me to move home," she said. "It's my hometown fair and all my family is there."

Her experience includes the top job at the **Butte County Fair**, Gridley, Calif., and the **Sonoma-Marin Fair**. She made \$89,800 at the Sonoma-Marin Fair, and will make a similar salary in Dixon.

Conklin will stay on until the board finds her replacement. The fair is accepting applications through Nov. 15. The salary range is \$75,500 to \$89,800.

The **Arizona State Fair**, Phoenix, Oct. 11-Nov. 3, was packing the grounds this year with new entertainment, along with its popular tried and true.

Among the approximately 70 rides on **Ray Cammack Show's** midway this year, there are several new rides for the fair. For young children, new rides include: Quad Runners, Farm Tractors, Motor Bikes, and VW Bugs, all manufactured by **Dalton Kid Rides**. Also new for the fair is the Groovy Bus, manufactured by **SBF Rides**.

For older children and adults, **Ray Cammack Shows** is debuting its the Mach 1 Speed Ride by **KMG**.

For patrons needing to take a break, the fair created two new areas just for that, The Hangout and the Play Space. Adults who are looking to escape the madness of the Fair will find refuge in The Hangout, a brand new entertainment venue featuring fun games, stage entertainment, and a wide variety of beer, wine, and mixed drinks.

For kids with their parents, Play Space offers the chance for kids to play in a space-themed play area filled with indoor toys, games, arts and crafts, reading and more.



Here is Wright's Amusements' Chance Carousel (right) and in the background is Wisdom's Starship 3000 and Larson Fire Ball at the Four States Fair and Rodeo, Texarkana, Ark.

Wright's also played this Avalanche (far right) at the Texarkana date as well. The carnival has had this Wisdom-manufactured ride for two years.  
AT/SUE NICHOLS



## Wright's Amusements reporting good 2013 despite Houston rains

HOUSTON, Texas — The 2013 season has been a good one so far for John and Barbara Ring, owners of Wright's Amusements.

Good, at least, until the show pulled into Houston the first of October to play its run of malls, which it does every year from October through February.

"We play some major malls down here until February," John Ring said. "And, so far, the weather is perfect all week and then on the weekends, it rains."

The show works all year long. In February, Ring said they begin working their way out through west Texas, into New Mexico and up into Colorado, which is home for the Ring family. The show's fair season starts up at the first of May.

Ring said they have been a year-round operation for quite some time.

"We found when we took time off, we would lose some of our key personnel," he said. "We wanted to keep them. Then, when we fell into this deal with the major malls down here, we decided it was worth it."

The show has a total of 40 rides. On some of the Houston mall dates, Ring said they will have as many as 35 rides on the lot. The third week of October, the show was split into two units.

A new ride was added to the Wright's Amusement's arsenal this year. That was a Wisdom Himalaya. It was delivered during the show's run at the Four States Fair and Rodeo, Texarkana, Ark., Sept. 13-22. This is the second year at this 69-year-old-fair and Ring said it was a good one. Along with their array of rides, they had quite a few food concessions booked in with them.

► See WRIGHT'S, page 84

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## ►WRIGHT'S

Continued from page 83

Show-owned concessions include two funnel cakes, two cotton candies, a lemonade and a Slushy.

From the Texarkana date, Wright's Amusements moved on to the Texas Rice Festival, Winnie, Texas, Oct. 2-6. Then, the show moved on down to start its Houston run of mall dates.

Ring said he didn't have any new rides or equipment on his wish list at this time.

"I think we pretty much

have what we need right now," Ring said. "It would have to be pretty spectacular for me to consider."

He is looking at possible new dates for 2014, however; something he does every year. The Four States Fair has turned out to be a great date for him and he would like to find others like this.

"We are always working on that," he said. "But, so far this year, it has been pretty much business as usual. Our fairs have been right on line when the weather holds."

This Allen Herschell wet boat ride was originally built in 1954. John Ring, Wright's Amusements, said they had three of them. They took the best of the three and "made once nice ride." It was set up during the run at the Four States Fair and Rodeo, Texarkana, Ark., Oct. 13-22. This is Wright's Amusements second year there.

AT/SUE NICHOLS



## Among the rains, Oklahoma State Fair remained on par with 2012

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — The 2013 Oklahoma State Fair, Sept. 12-22, dominated the month of September at the State Fair Park and ended with a great turnout.

The weather for the first half of the run provided some challenges. State Fair Park went under a "lightning warning" four times during the first six days. Rain was present on opening day and then again on the first Friday, Monday and Tuesday. The first Tuesday was particularly challenging when a micro-burst hit State Fair Park, causing some damage and three minor injuries.

Even with the weather-related delays and issues, the fair still managed to generate over \$103,275,000 million in direct spending into the Oklahoma City economy and the overall attendance was on par with 2012 at approximately 900,000.

Wade Shows presented the midway at the fair and offered a number of midway discounts and promotions. The carnival also provided upwards toward 70 rides on the midway.

Disney On Ice presents Rockin' Ever After ticket sales were up over 10 percent when compared to 2012 numbers. The PRCA Xtreme Bulls Tour sold-out the evening that Eli Young Band performed, and Commercial Exhibitor Space sold-out before tickets went on sale on in early July.

New foods included BBQ Nacho Pie, Cheesy Bacon Bombs, Cookie Dough Parfait, Bacon Bloody Mary, Deep-Fried Watermelon, PBJ Burger & Pancake Burger, and Crawfish Enchiladas.



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# Kansas State Fair looking forward to the next 100 years

**STORY:** Pam Sherborne

psherborne@amusementtoday.com

HUTCHINSON, Kan. — The year was 1873. The location was a small wooden livery stable behind the only bank in a small, newly established prairie town called Hutchinson.

The event was a two-day fair held in September by a small group of businessmen, which led to something much bigger.

As the Kansas State Fair celebrated its 100th birthday in September of this year, looking back at this fair 140 years ago was a logical step for fairgoers walking the fairgrounds.

It was this fair that, after changing names, locations and presenters a number of times, became the official Kansas State Fair in 1913.

And, this state-sponsored fair is as vital to the state of Kansas today as it was in 1913. Its continued success over the last 10 years, even while the U.S. has been suffering from sluggish economic times, is proof.

In the last 10 years, attendance at the fair has been very steady. Those attendances are:

- 2003 — 343,244
- 2004 — 337,489
- 2005 — 324,705
- 2006 — 343,225
- 2007 — 338,363
- 2008 — 319,104
- 2009 — 350,856
- 2010 — 354,184
- 2011 — 339,376
- 2012 — 343,007

Fair officials anticipate 2013 to be equally successful. General Manager Denny Stoecklein said at the first of October that final figures hadn't been audited. He did feel the hot temperatures this year most likely did affect the total.

"The first four days were over 100 degrees," Stoecklein said. "Then, we had upper 90s for a few days. It finally turned mild after that."

The Kansas State Fair has been located on the same 112 acres in Hutchinson since 1912.

Yearly upgrades, as well as large capital improvements, were made over the years. Since 2001, Stoecklein said

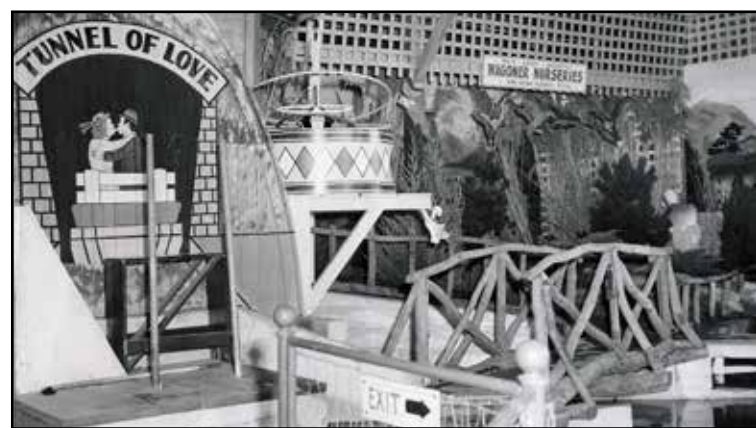


**Stoecklein**



**Above, an ARM Super Shot drop tower thrills riders at the Kansas State Fair. At right, A Chance Rides Wheel and a rare Sky Wheel also make up the mobile portion of the fair's midway ride selection.**

COURTESY KANSAS STATE FAIR



Many things have changed over the last 100 years at the Kansas State Fair, Hutchinson, except for the fact it is still a very successful event. Although the local fair that started it all was held 140 years ago in Hutchinson, the fair didn't technically become the state fair until 1913. In 1915, the Old Mill water ride (top) was built on the grounds. It is still there today. Shown above is also a scene from the midway in 1946, a young boy on a train ride. COURTESY KANSAS STATE FAIR

there have been more than \$30 million pumped into the grounds.

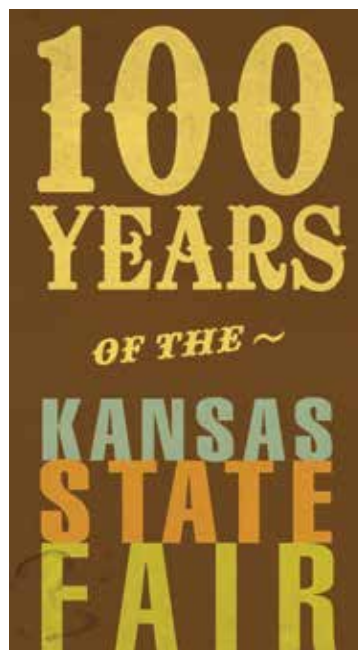
"We have touched virtually all facilities on the grounds to some extent," he said. "We did a lot of renovations and there was some new construction as well."

Stoecklein said there were many air conditioners installed on the grounds, which were very welcome especially with the hot temperatures of this year. Also as part of the capital improvements, fair officials renovated an existing building and turned it into a food court. There is now room for 11 food vendors as well as 500 plus visitors to sit and eat in an air-conditioned atmosphere.

Stoecklein has been with the fair for 19 years, 11 of which in the position of general manger.

"Originally, I came as special events director and held that position for four years," he said. "Then, I became the assistant manager and held that position for four years."

Then, he became the general manager. And, Stoecklein said he has never really wanted to do anything else.



He grew up within walking distance of the fairgrounds. His wife, Michelle, is also from Hutchinson.

"This is home for us," he said. "It has been pretty special for me to be a part of the 100th anniversary."

Even though the first fair held in Hutchinson was 140 years ago, technically the Kansas State Fair began in 1913 when the city of Hutchinson made an agreement with the State of Kansas to give over

ownership of the 112 acres to the state for monetary support. When that happened, the event could officially name itself the Kansas State Fair.

The move to the centrally located 112 acres was supported even before that locally with county residents approval a \$50,000 bond issue to pay for the expansion, which included in the year 1912 a Santa Fe switch track that was laid from the southeast to bring rides and shows directly into the grounds.

Significant items in the fair's timeline include:

- The construction of the House of Capper, one of several around the state, appeared on the fairgrounds about 1913. It offered a place to rest in rocking chairs stationed on the shaded veranda, a cool drink of water for thirsty visitors and, possibly most importantly, rest room facilities. After serving as the Professional Arts Building for many years, the Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation raised funds in 2007 to restore the building and once again provide fairgoers a place to rest, relax, and enjoy the fair.

► See KANSAS, page 87



## ►KANSAS

Continued from page 86

•The Old Mill that was completed in time for the opening day of the 1915 fair. One thousand feet of water-filled channels featured boats, which promised to transport passengers through “gloomy caves of gleesome gladness.” Only three of these rides, including this one, still exist in the U.S. today.

•Governor Alf M. Landon and Senator Arthur Capper visited the fair on September 17, 1935, to dedicate the new \$100,000 4-H Encampment Building. Delegates from 4-H clubs all over the state came for their first encampment in the new building, which was heralded as the finest in the United States. The Encampment Building is still used extensively today for the Fair and throughout the year for a

variety of non-fair activities.

•During World War II, fairgoers were able to buy war bonds and stamps. “Scrap Day” was declared during the 1942 fair and over 32 tons of metal to aid the war effort were collected by offering free adult admission for 100 pounds and free child’s admission for 50 pounds.

•The familiar Lake Talbott, once a neglected sandpit known mostly to area fishermen, was developed into a landscaped garden spot in 1931 and named in honor of Joe Talbott, Hutchinson pioneer businessman and unselfish supporter of the fair for 50 years.

Some highlights of the 2013 centennial fair included the Labor Day Parade, a food drive, Welde’s Big Bear Show, and a variety of grounds acts.

There were commemorative birthday items and a

### Kansas State Fair food fun facts

2013 Kansas State Fair foods included:

1. Purple funnel cakes on K-State Day, September 8
2. Purple lemonade on K-State Day, September 8
3. Dutch Apple funnel cakes with caramel topping
4. Deep-fried birthday cake
5. Deep-fried jalapeño twinkies
6. Maple bacon snickerdoodles
7. Deep-fried mac and cheese
8. Calamari

A fairgoer favorite is a Pronto Pup, the hot dog on a stick covered in a flour batter and deep-fried to a golden brown. These are served at fairs nationwide, but are a big hit at the Kansas State Fair with five Pronto Pup stands throughout the Fairgrounds to keep the crowds pleased.

commemorative Kansas State Lottery Ticket. Stoecklien said in 2012, guests could place mosaic tiles into a a piece of art that was unveiled this year as a centennial icon.

In 1973, a time capsule was buried and that was unveiled this year as well.

Special competitions for the centennial celebration were held in the categories of quilting, food, agriculture, fine arts, and photography.

Other special events included a first-time Kansas State Fair Senior Spelling Bee and State Fair Bingo.



Not to be left out of the latest trend in the amusement industry, the Kansas State Fair also included this zipline for those wanting to test their daredevil skills.

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# Ride accident drops North Carolina fair attendance

RALEIGH, N.C. — A ride accident on Oct. 24 at the North Carolina State Fair most probably was the culprit that dropped fair attendance this year to the lowest since 2009. Attendance total was 927,563, down from 965,297 in 2012 and the more than one million posted in 2011 and 2010. Fair officials saw a significant attendance drop the final two days of the fair after the accident. The fair ran Oct. 17-27.

The accident on a Technical Park Vortex ride owned by Family Attractions Amusement Co. is still being investigated. The ride didn't shut down properly, throwing five passengers to the ground as they were trying to exit. Investigators are alleging the ride had been

tampered with and the ride operator has been charged with three counts of assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury. Powers Great American Midways holds the contract to provide the midway at the North Carolina fair with more than 100 rides. Powers brings in his rides and then contracts with other companies to complete the midway.

Early indicators pointed to a successful 2013 event with Powers bringing in several of his new rides including the Stampede double wheel ride, a retrofit of the Wisdom Ramage ride a new ARM Rock Star and a new Falgas train ride.

—Pam Sherborne

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Seen here is the main midway at the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh as viewed from the Chance Rides Giant Wheel. Powers Great American Midways contracts for the gigantic midway with 105 rides this year. Wade Shows supplements along with some other operators. Below, Corky Powers, of Powers Great American Midways, takes time to pose for the camera at the show's administration offices compound that was loaded with these beautiful flowers at the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh. Among the rides found on the midway were four gondola wheels placed strategically throughout the sprawling fairgrounds for optimal viewing by guests. COURTESY RON GUSTAFSON



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# Wyoming State Winter Fair asking for community help

LANDER, Wyo. — Volunteer help has dried up for the Wyoming State Winter Fair, Lander, and event organizers say the fair will be discontinued if more community support is not offered immediately.

Winter Fair President John Schumacher alerted county officials and media outlets last

month to the situation.

"The Winter Fair is a non-profit organization and is put on by a group of volunteers, which brings me to the purpose of this letter," Schumacher wrote in a release. "Without new support from the community, the Winter Fair will end."

The fair, staged annually in February for the past 45 years,

has seen its volunteer pool age and shrink.

It has no affiliation with the Fremont County Fair, Riverton, Wyo., or the Wyoming State Fair, Douglas, and is not supported by tax money.

Schumacher thanked business sponsors for their steady support over the years, but he said the Winter Fair board still

needs more help if the event is to survive.

The Winter Fair offers a lineup of consumer shows, agriculture and animal competition, and entertainment each winter in a schedule usually encompassing two to three weeks.

"Frankly, there is not as much energy as in their ear-

lier years," Schumacher stated. "Without additional volunteers to share and spread out the work, we cannot continue."

The board held an informational meeting last month in hopes of gathering new ideas and ways to operate the fair, but Schumacher wrote that the meeting drew no public participation at all.

## BRIEFS

### Attendance increases slightly for 2013 Arkansas State Fair

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Attendance heading into the final weekend at the Arkansas State Fair, Little Rock, Oct. 11-20, was up slightly over last year despite a slight downturn in the last two before the final weekend.

Fair General Manager Ralph Shoptaw said attendance through Fri., Oct. 18, had numbered 319,424, compared to 308,022 at the same point in 2012. With sunny skies and highs expected in the 60s and 70s for the final weekend, Shoptaw had expected large crowds.

Fair officials say 51,953 people attended the fair Oct. 18, the eighth day of the fair. That's down from 66,632 on the eighth day of last year's fair. Thursday's attendance was also down from a year ago.

### Grayson County Fair in danger of closing

SHERMAN, Texas — Financial troubles have the Grayson County Fair, Sherman, Texas, in danger of shutting down.

An estimated 10,000 people came out to Loy Lake Park Oct. 11-13, but for the past few years declining revenues and bad weather have crippled the event, Fair Board President Joyce White said.

The volunteer board had plans to meet last month to go over this year's results and determine whether they have enough money to operate next year.

The fair was shut down once before, but then it got started up again 19 years ago.

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